THE COMMONWEAL

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THE COMMERCE OF CULTURE

THE colleges are filled to the brim. Every young man or woman who can get anything like the right sort of encouragement is taking a fling at a degree, which means that the foundations they patronize have an excellent opportunity to mold the national citizenry. Are they meeting this opportunity? We have just read Mr. Percy Marks's reply to the question, "Which Way Parnassus?" It seems a sane and philosophic response. Perhaps Mr. Marks has taken the colleges too seriously. In a good many places, his criticism seems more applicable to human nature than to those peculiar expressions of human nature called campuses. He bears down hard on the student body; he bears down still harder on the faculty; he bears down hardest of all on the alumni. The details singled out in his volume for denunciatory mention are all pretty nearly true, but one cannot help wondering a little if the general effect could not be improved by venturing a comparison with the world outside university walls. After all, students, professors and alumni, in their turn, view alma mater as a pleasant retreat from that world—which apparently argues for something.

Blind, foolish and ineffective though much of education is, academia does rise superior to its environment. Its real problem—as also its real hope—lies in its own reaction upon the world outside. If that harried sum-total of factors can be improved a little through the agency of cultural training, the final improvement of the colleges themselves must follow. At this point, it becomes interesting to consider briefly certain reflections contributed to the Christian Century by Mr. Frederick Lynch: "Never mind the fact that in some university towns the churches are reaching quite a few students—the fact remains that in the great universities where church attendance is voluntary, students do not go to church. What follows? After four years of having nothing to do with church, most of them do not go back after graduation. They are lost to the church." Mr. Lynch might have added that during these same four years, students have much to do with ideas and practices hostile, not merely to the church, but to the nature of morality and religion as such. His conclusion would then be that in so far as the majority of American colleges are concerned, the influence of higher education is destructive of practical religion, or at least provocative of complete indifference.

This conclusion is correct. Mr. Mencken, Mr. Theodore Dreiser and such persons as the very wobbly

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Will Durant are the great university preachers. Leaving all comparisons and side-issues out of view, this fact cannot be denied even as it cannot be condoned by those who feel that religion is a basic element of civilization. What is the good of laboring to append to elementary education a few lessons in Christian doctrine if the final result is to be a university lady or gentleman completely emancipated from religious concerns? From the Catholic point of view, one might argue that students at religious colleges—and also students drawn together by the Newman Clubs—are safeguarded against the effects of the general trend. But are they? Consciously or otherwise, student-bodies in the most carefully isolated religious schools are influenced by the atmosphere which prevails in the leading universities. These set the pace and establish the standard. A lad at Siwash is always instinctively curious about what the boys are doing at Yale. Note, if you are inclined to be incredulous, the spread of the college humor magazines, the etiquette of drinking, or the mechanics of yelling. More important, however, is the effect which the dominant quality of university-bred people has upon an individual after graduation. Does the Catholic man or woman, educated and thrown into the company of his equals, pull against the stream? Watch him or her! A few statistics on this subject might induce apoplexy in some quarters. These statistics are nevertheless badly needed.

Thereby a problem of supreme importance is suggested again by the convention of the National Catholic Alumni Federation, to be held in Philadelphia during the three days following November 12. Heaven knows this federation idea is a good thing, a necessary thing. But a good many people seem to feel that it is wholly an academic thing, the chief practical purpose of which ought to be a drive for somebody else's endowment. We affirm here and now that nothing the federation could do, if it aspires to serve America and the spirit, is half so important as endowing itself. Poverty-stricken and pitifully hampered though many religious schools are, they are fabulously plutocratic in comparison with the social and intellectual facilities available to their graduates. Assume that a little club is started somewhere in a large city. The result will primarily be to emphasize anew the sense of comparative insignificance, of social and civic inferiority, with which most of those qualified to join the club are already abundantly supplied. A dingy little corner somewhere may anneal a few worthy and loyal hearts, but it will make many others see very clearly the august proportions of structures dedicated to Harvard and Yale.

If there could be established in one of the major cities—preferably in New York, because whatever else one may think about it, New York does set standards—a really representative Catholic university club, the resulting influence would be of incalculable value. Suppose it were open to all the men and women now eligible for membership in the two federations; open also to Catholic graduates from secular colleges; and open finally to any other university-bred people who might enjoy association with a group to which they do not belong in body, but to which they are attracted in soul—the effect would surely be to prove, what is now glaringly unevident, that faith as western civilization has understood the word, is a matter of supreme importance to a considerable percentage of educated Americans. In addition to the steadying social influence such a foundation could exert, much might be expected of a centralization of leading intellectual activities. Here the offices of such a movement as Cardinal Hayes has sponsored for the reclamation of criminals could be established; lecture courses and even university extension work could be carried on with some distinction; and the headquarters of several organizations in which educated persons are expected to take a particular interest could be adequately housed. In such an environment the Catholic educated consciousness might triumphantly escape the present universal impression of bondage and insignificance. The point is not magnificence, but efficiency. We talk of restoring the feeling for coöperation; but no guild could ever have the significance, the solidarity, or the influence of a guild of the educated. And from time out of memory the guild has had a guild hall.

Granted that the idea briefly outlined here is valuable and worthy, its practicability is a mere detail. A foundation of adequate character would cost less than another college—much less than a number of comparatively unnecessary institutionalized luxuries. Were the members of the hierarchy to agree upon the project tomorrow, work toward carrying it through might begin next week. There is really only one obstacle: the feeling that doing anything definite for the college-bred is a concession to intellectual snobbery. Why must the educated be forever thinking and living in their own world? Well, something can be said for this feeling. A good many inflated little victims of the collegiate system are really not worth any great expenditure of energy. This fact, however, does not dispose of a burning question. We draw your attention once again to the reflections of Mr. Frederick Lynch. American youth is going to college; and through college it is gradually, steadily but surely losing its interest in religion. Does that undoubted fact seem of any significance to you? Are you at all concerned over the truth that the lives most university-bred people lead and the influence they in turn exert—socially, in thought, in literature, in economics, in art—is governed by a negation of spiritual values? Unless we are very much mistaken, you will, after carefully weighing these inquiries, conclude that no missionary activity now open to the Catholic Church in America is more necessary than the salvaging of education—after education has formally ended.

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THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

THE Pan-European Congress, which assembled in Vienna a number of enthusiasts for the program of a federated and coöperative Europe that Count Coudenhove-Kalergi formulated some years ago, succeeded in outlining a number of the major social and economic difficulties of the hour. What it proposed in the way of remedies hardly sounds as practical as the resolutions adopted from time to time by the League of Nations. There is, however, no reason for considering the two organizations contradictory or hostile to each other. Though the League began with an ambitious, world-wide program, time has shown that the essence of its influence is continental. The Pan-European movement, like several others of lesser impetus, merely prepares the way for the moral effectiveness of the League. By convincing citizens in various countries that nothing can be gained by too heavy an emphasis upon nationalism, tariff barriers, or deeply rooted local traditions, it helps to create a spirit of amity that sooner or later will reduce the dangers of war and promote effective coöperation. Indeed, the vitality of Coudenhove-Kalergi's idea lay in the fact that it approached from a philosophic and idealistic point of view the same problems which the League was taking up practically and diplomatically.

ONLY one further comment need be made. The absence of confidence—of what one might well term salutary optimism—from such gatherings as the Pan-European Congress is, of course, a result of war and economic chaos. But its effect is to rob public opinion of creative enthusiasm and willingness to make sacrifices. The Viennese might well contrast it with the confident leadership of their great pre-war parliamentarian, Karl Lueger, to whose memory a fitting monument has just been erected. Lueger was a great statesman as well as a protagonist of great principle. During the years when he organized the Christian Social party and carried it to victory over effete universalism and insidious financial corruption, he proved that a man could make the heart of a people throb with the redemptive emotion which lived in himself. The magnificent energy incorporated in his person proved contagious. Naturally, one must doubt that Lueger, who died before the storm broke in 1914, could have staved off the débâcle of 1919. But those who meet and discuss affairs in Vienna might well take heart from the example of his lion-hearted soul. For he had proved that a knowledge of evil is not more formidable than a resolve to overcome evil. He was an emancipator from despair.

STRANGELY enough, the centenary of Saint Francis seems to have given an almost unprecedented momentum to the "forces of time" which are bringing on a settlement of the Roman question. The mere fact that both the Papacy and the Italian government officially participated, side by side, in the festival which reached its height when Cardinal Merry del Val blessed the throng of pilgrims to Assisi, was enough to predict the rapidly approaching reconciliation of two powers that have faced each other in silent battle during fifty years. Thus the Saint who scorned property and separated himself as completely as possible from even organized monasticism, may become the patron in whose name the age-old temporal endowment of the Church is to be restored. One may, of course, admit that Catholicism does not need the ancient papal states or any other official property. It carried on magnificently without them in the early centuries. But the moral unity of the Italian people depends very directly upon the complete spiritual independence of pontifical Rome. So long as the Vatican is an intern of Italy, under an arrangement which involves the violation of principle and just rights, political quietism and unrest will follow as a natural consequence. The Church is not situated in some preternatural, atmospheric realm, aloof from human institutions and concerns. It is established on earth, among the children of men and their institutions. There was a time when aery idealism, of the visionary romantic sort, forgot this entirely. The world is inevitably more realistic at the present hour.

BUT what can be done about the problem? Mussolini has faced it squarely ever since the rise of Fascismo in 1920. He has had the ability to see—what positivism has recognized pretty generally—that Catholicism, viewed purely as a mundane moral institution, is of value to national governments precisely

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because it is international. It is the only kingdom on earth from which a country without roseate imperial ambitions is sure to meet no rivalry. Because it is of a higher order, it lends stability to rulers in the lower order. The older Italian patriots made the mistake of thinking in terms of federated states—and, of course, Rome seemed an essential part of the federation. Mussolini, however, thinks in terms of unity, which is as much a matter of the spirit as of territories or cities. For him, the problem therefore wears a two-fold aspect: Italian unity needs an independent and international Papacy, but Italian unity also needs the idea and the habitat of Rome. The solution lies in finding a compromise which will properly, adequately divide Rome. And that such a solution is practicable as well as expedient, remains not merely a tenet of Fascist doctrine, but also the definite conviction of all who have studied the situation carefully. As for the Papacy, in its timelessness it can well afford to wait.

SMALL mercies have their uses, but the smallness of the mercies to which optimists will resort for comfort in time of trouble is always a marvel to the philosophically minded. In telling the New York Chamber of Commerce that unemployment figures in Britain have "increased to a surprisingly small extent" since the general strike, Sir William Mackenzie, who is chairman of the Industrial Mission to the United States, gives himself all the air of conveying really cheering news. His theory that the strike was lost by the workers owing to the diffusion of education among their children is so plausible that to ask why, in face of it, the present Conservative government in England is showing itself disposed to cut down appropriations for schooling, would be as inhospitable as it would be awkward. "With large numbers of young people of this character coming to manhood every year," goes on cheery Sir William, "there is a very onerous duty on those of us who are helping to guide the destinies of our country that these fine aspirations shall not be shattered by disillusionment and disappointed hopes. They must be given their opportunity."

THE nature of the opportunities in store for these fine young British proletarians in the near future may be best judged from the eleven resolutions adopted unanimously by the Conservative Party Conference at Scarborough, all designed to "curb the political power which the trade-unions have acquired," to make picketing illegal, and to institute a public auditing of trade-union accounts, from which Conservative party funds, naturally, will remain exempt. The agenda of the conference called for the adoption of an official party song, and a woman delegate from the smitten mining districts suggests Land of Hope and Glory. Glory, as a national product, besides being a little under a cloud today, remains a matter of outlook. Hope, we suggest, will ring a little truer when it is less strictly rationed on a basis of power and possession than we see it in post-war Britain today.

PROTESTS by Mussolini's government (in other words, by Mussolini) against a revue in Paris featuring Italian peculiarities of voice and gesture, the objections of Americans living in London to another revue handling the debt situation rather roughly, and the strictures by French residents in New York against the performance of Beau Geste which concerns itself with the French colonial forces, come too close together and in too many different parts of the world not to suggest that an exacerbated sense of national amour propre is a main factor in the international difficulties which we all deplore. The reaction of the stranger in a strange city and country when he sees his nationals presented to him in the cold light of foreign observation, is a strangely mixed affair and somewhat dependent for its manifestation on time and place.

THE Americans who, according to a London news despatch, "threw fits" in the lobby of the Little Theatre between the acts of a recent production, London's Potinière, probably keep nothing more than a tolerant smile for the innumerable cartoons in which Uncle Sam is represented as an extortionate usurer, and the countless editorials in which his penchant for repayment of moneys advanced is given as a main source of Europe's ills. The black scowl and big fists of the Duce have been a godsend to nimble pencils for two years without any international incident arising therefrom. Obviously, there is something in the atmosphere of the theatre, derived quite possibly from the very different reactions of neighbors to right and left, before and behind, which brings a sudden sense of isolation, and makes protest a patriotic duty not to be evaded without a suspicion of poltroonery poisoning the blood and spoiling the evening. Francis Bacon, in his warning to contestants not bent on catstrophe to "keep away from contempt," gave advice that is very timely today. However much we may dislike the sad intensity that is driving laughter from the world, it is advice that producers and writers for the stage would be well advised to heed.

THERE is plenty of evidence to show that the American Federation of Labor is interested in Detroit for other reasons than its fitness as a convention city. For some years the chief source of danger to unionism has come from the automotive industry with its high wages, its "Ford Plan," its Studebaker welfare movement, and its ability to provide places for workers dissatisfied with other industries. The manufacturers of motor-cars have absorbed more than a million men and have treated them reasonably well. But in addition to the fact that they maintained the principle of the open shop, there is the lamentable truth that automobile-making reduces workers to the level of auto-

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matons who do only one little thing all their lives. The man who sprays the body with sizzling paint; the man who bores the half-inch groove in a small wrought-iron part; the man who wheels the same barrel of scrap-iron to the same heap a certain number of times a day—all these are victimized by their specialties. But could unionism alter these conditions? According to Mr. Henry Ford, who ought to know, men come to like the idea that their daily toil is utterly devoid of variation. He admits he can't understand why they do, but the fact is there. It will be interesting to see if the American Federation plans to begin its campaign with an educational drive. But in spite of the fact that the Detroit convention seems to have emphasized the wrong point, there is no doubt that unionism would safeguard workers in the automotive industry or that it could encourage them to take more than a mechanical delight in their work. The declaration by Mr. Ford ought to interest deeply students of a certain kind of evolution.

PERHAPS the most important issue raised at the convention is the five-day week. If one credited the remarks which a few prominent plutocratic persons have made relative to this issue, it would seem as if President Green contemplated nothing less than a national law making forty hours of work imperative in all industries. How far this is from being the truth might be inferred from the mere historical circumstance that the federation has not made even the eight-hour day a political question. It merely waited until its own strength and the progress of common sense induced Judge Gary to humanize the steel trust. For years mankind's faith in industry has reposed upon the conviction that production could be increased to a point where not so many hours of life would have to be spent in the company of machines. It would be absurd not to justify this faith as soon as the condition of commerce makes that possible. Mr. Ford's inauguration of the five-day week is ample proof that if manufacturers spend more time in governing their industries and less in indulging their fancy for leisure (a fancy which, some people apparently assume, is commendable only in everybody who does not work) there may come a time when the routine of toil will be less devastating and the development of humankind more obvious.

IT is not criticizing Dr. John A. Ryan, whose writings and contributions to social service are one of the Church's contemporary assets in America, to see in the complaint voiced by him before the Catholic Conference on Peace-War Ethics something of a misconception that keeps cropping up from time to time in more fields than one. Dr. Ryan is grieved at what he terms the "perverse emphasis" placed upon war in school histories, and does not except Catholic handbooks from his strictures. In examining eight history texts used in our schools, he has discovered that "the proportion of space given to war varies from 16 percent to 35 percent, while the number of pages devoted to peace describe a descending scale from four to none." Dr. Ryan's demur is strikingly similar to one very often heard when the usefulness of the press is under discussion. "Why surrender so much space," the critics murmur, "to disasters on sea and land, plague and famine, murders and crime generally, leaving the sane and sweet activities of well-ordered life to go practically by default? Is not the picture that results a violently refracted one, and is not the newspaper responsible?" One well-known organ is even conducting its news selection along the lines of the dissenters. But, at least so far, there is no sign that its prim columns are generally recognized as being a final and corrected picture of life in America or anywhere else.

NO doctoring of present school-texts along the lines which Dr. Ryan seems to suggest, will ever prevent wars being the high lights in a nation's history, or save the natural high-spirited boy or girl from an anxiety to know all there is to be learned about the great figures who have entered into national consciousness by way of them. War is a very terrible thing. But the history that should merely present it under its grievous aspect, leaving out of account or understressing the heroism and sacrifice of self it calls forth, would be a very lame and partial document. Ruskin has reminded us that the soldier is held dear, not because he takes another's life, but because he is ready to lose his own. The lesson that life is most keenly and zestfully lived, least satisfied with material ends and most accessible to spiritual, when it is lived on a tenure of surrender at demand, is one that the world never needed more than now. Those who object to the lustre under which war is presented to the growing mind, and seek practical means to redress it, seem unaware of the size of the task they have set themselves. Whether their dissent take the ridiculous form of a recent ukase issued by a woman's organization which bade toy-sellers cease displaying lead soldiers in their windows, or is heard in such temperate and plausible words as Dr. Ryan's, the quarrel is alike with something too deeply rooted in human nature for eradication. The best way to make peace and its glories attractive is not to depose the soldier from his niche of honor, but to make a place beside him for the missionary, pioneer, or explorer, and let a common aureole encircle both heads.

CRITICISM is less vehement now than it was in the days when Pope and Dennis called each other names, but it still endeavors to be relatively masculine. Whether or not all reviewing of plays and books ought to be anonymous—whether the critic ought bravely to meet the burly wrath his verdict enkindles, or be protected against it—is still an open

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question. The editors of such a review as The Commonweal sometimes receive letters of protest from authors (or their friends) who exclaim against what they consider unfairness or cruelty. These epistles are matched by others from irate book-buyers who aver that a volume purchased because it had been warmly recommended turned out to be second-rate or trivial. Obviously, the two forms of indignation see matters from opposite points of view. Both are beside the point, however, in so far as they miss noticing that a review can never express editorial opinion. Were those responsible for the conduct of a magazine like this to sit in judgment over every volume mentioned in their columns, the life they lead would be nothing short of a sleepless nightmare. Their sole practical measure must be to select critics as carefully as possible and advise them to be honest. Individuals may differ about the quality of a book or play. But when the critic fails to note flagrant faults in scholarship or technique, when he endorses the second-rate because it is the product of a prominent personage, he does not prove himself magnanimous and kind-hearted. He merely demonstrates beyond the possibility of doubt that he is ignorant, servile or insouciant. To expect nothing but praise—or blame—from a reviewer, is to damn him irretrievably.

NOR should it pass unnoticed that an endeavor like this magazine, which exists solely in the hope that it can produce a literary expression remotely approximate to a great tradition of art and thought, would betray itself and those who make sacrifices toward its assistance if it did not cherish the potential nobility of the spoken word. Language, which is so much of the substance of the soul, which during long years of Christian philosophy was almost identified with thought itself, is the medium of both culture and grace. One need not defend the mystic gift of art against malpractice so vehemently and uncompromisingly as did Joris Karl Huysmans. But though proceeding in all charity, the critic who permits himself to ignore the fact that the form and content of the language of man reflect as almost no other natural objects do the existence of Divinity, is either incompetent or malignant. It is, after all, far easier to fall a victim to the spell cast by a fresh and relatively charming production and so miss the ills that artist flesh is heir to. Not all critics have the opportunity for sober and cool reflection that was enjoyed by a man like Sainte-Beuve. Most of them write hastily, knowing that their work must bear the attractiveness of novelty. Ultimately they learn to profit by their own errors and to accept without too wry a face the public scrutiny which adjudges what they do.

REPLYING to a correspondent who had something to say about Orestes Brownson in these columns, a young man who lives in Chicago wrote as follows: "The sponsors of the banquet in honor of Brownson, held in this city on May 19, felt that it would not be impossible to form a permanent organization, eventually national in scope, to recall Americans, and particularly Catholic Americans, to a consciousness of the greatness of this figure. During the last month, a committee has been formed, a constitution of the association known as The Friends of Brownson has been formulated, and plans are practically completed for the convening of the first quarterly meeting of this new association. Within the next year or so we expect to form branches in other cities. Does this seem visionary to you? If you saw how few our numbers here really are, possibly you might think so. But few as we are, we have lots of confidence and expect some friends in other cities to help us out." Visionary or not, the idea is admirable, and one of the best things about it is that it was born of the enthusiasm of young people—"beardless youths," indeed, as Brownson himself would have said. The old world is proud of many an organization which grew out of similar humble beginnings. We of the new world may at least be elated over the beginnings.

AS an act of solemn thanksgiving for 150 years of the American tradition, the High Mass celebrated in the great stadium of the Sesquicentennial Exposition was an event of singular magnificence and import. It is estimated that nearly three hundred thousand people gathered on the morning of October 3, when Cardinal Dougherty ascended the altar that had been erected for the occasion. No aspect of the exposition was either so arresting or so significant. It calls attention also to the numerous ways in which Catholic life, particularly among lay people, is illustrated in the "City of Brotherly Love." Of these ways, none is more interesting than the Business Men's Guild, which has now completed a year of fruitful existence. It was organized for the purpose of interesting practical and usually very busy citizens in discussions of the bases of religious belief. To these discussions, members of other churches are invited and encouraged to participate freely. Thus a frank and healthy atmosphere is created, in which the spirit can find refreshment and nurture. The guild is, in fact, something like a juncture at which faith and doubt can meet. That it can exist and function admirably is another proof of the liberality of those American institutions whose founding the Sesquicentennial was designed to commemorate.

FEATURING vivacity to the last and "full of thoughts on all sorts of subjects," Lady Astor has once more taken her way back to her adopted country, and, as is customary and fitting, we are treated to a sheaf of bright wisdom before she sails. What she has to tell us hardly seems to earn the space and position accorded it by our city editors. Dean Inge is "a

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gloomy man," religion is "something to cheer us and make us content"; British youth may be listless—"how could it well be otherwise, coming from the shadow of war?" But the coming generation, of which the heir to the Astor millions is offered as a typical example, is "full of pep, and will carry on in the old way." New York is "groping for a spiritual viewpoint. . . . Just think of the old saloons!" We have had it all so often before that the only impression which remains as we read is a vague wonder at the significance that still seems to attach to the random utterances of visitors to our shores whose qualifications to respect are the purely accidental ones of social position or notoriety. Trained observers and writers are sent hither and thither by our enterprising journals and seldom fail to report what they see and hear in reasoned and thought-compelling fashion. Books pour from the presses written by those qualified to draw conclusions, in which what is really happening in the world is surveyed almost from month to month. But the breezy generalities of some favorite of fortune easily preëmpt them in public attention. The itch of the interviewer has always been an Americanism humiliating to thoughtful Americans. In a day so thoroughly informed as our own, it is nothing much more than a troublesome atavism—a toy which a grownup people should make up their minds to discard.

THE death of a simple and self-effacing Christian Brother recently touched the hearts of a surprisingly large number of New Yorkers. Prelates and monsignori, laymen of every station in life, flocked to the church where the body of Brother Felician, worn out by more than eighty years of life and activity, was blessed for the last time. Those who thought only of the individual may have marveled at the learning and sacrifice to which the dead religious had given testimony. But beyond that, there are the affiliations which existed between him and his order. Brother Felician's time of service extended over most of the seventy-five years that his community has been active in New York City—active in education, in the work of the Catholic Protectorate and its subsidiary institutions, and in the training of men for the Church. These years were often bleak with poverty and obscurity. And so it must have been a very great pleasure to Brother Felician to see, before he died, the new and beautiful Manhattan College which symbolizes so well the educational ambitions of the order. The buildings, which stand upon a hill calmly surveying the restless city where so much effort has been expended on behalf of the spirit, are simple and sturdy but beautiful always. A visitor will find especially appropriate the carved oak Stations of the Cross executed by wood-workers from Oberammergau. This enduringly fine handiwork symbolizes an educational ideal which has worried infinitely more about the abiding simplicities of culture than about its finery.

MODERN STUDY CLUBS

PERHAPS the most remarkable aspect of contemporary culture is the development of what may be called educational subsidiaries—university extension schools, "alumni semesters," institutionalized lecture courses, and so forth. If none of these can be said to have attained the distinction which came to the old Lyceum idea in the days of Emerson, all, when taken together, do influence a very great number of people and do make for the propagation of definite ideas. Men in practical life often scoff at the lecturer engaged in solemnly haranguing "groups of women"; but when they are reflective they will not deny that the "gentleman with the gestures" has inaugurated important modifications of political and social affairs. The practical man, in turn, is probably responsible for the fact that the contemporary lecture-goer and "home student" is less interested in topics related to the liberal arts than in matters of civic moment. Who can estimate the number of addresses on the World Court which have been delivered since that tribunal became a subject of controversy? And who will doubt that, had it not been for these, the international issue would have missed inclusion in senatorial debates?

The distinctly Catholic share in this activity has not been small. It is true that various older "circles" and "clubs" have ceased to function with their primal vigor. University extension work has not as yet been taken up seriously by many religious schools. But certainly the number of groups eager to hear a lecturer, or brought together regularly for some kind of instruction or discussion, is larger than ever before. During recent months the radio has been added to the machinery of culture distribution, with at least some excellent results. In view of all this, the study club movement sponsored by the National Catholic Welfare Conference has been altogether appropriate and timely. The central organization reports that hundreds of groups and individuals throughout the country have manifested a deep interest in the pamphlets and other data supplied by the conference.

What are the results? If one remembers that the study club idea was first launched in 1922, the fact that it has organized a wealth of material and gained the support of numerous organizations is ample proof of vitality. Progress here has been quite as satisfactory as the growth of interest in the news service supplied by the conference. One might suggest that improvement could be expected were the program to be broadened a little. It seems a mistake to identify Catholic study too closely with the examination of industrial or economic issues. No school and no periodical could expect to survive if it limited itself to one department of the general cultural curriculum. But doubtless this is realized perfectly well by the conference, which has merely done the always expedient thing of putting its best foot forward first.

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BLASPHEMY AND BOLSHEVISM

A RÉGIME which has added so much to the pleasure of the world as has Bolshevism is still spoken of kindly—strange though that may be—in this utterly rotarian country. Perhaps we do not understand, as yet, how many tendencies converge in Moscow—tendencies of manifold sorts toward economic and spiritual rebellion, toward aesthetic and moral orgies for which a mankind nearer to primitivism than it has been for centuries unmistakably yearns. But there seems to be an even more subtle criminality abroad in Russia. It is the kind of spiritual fury which Dostoyevsky often alluded to and which is summed up pertinently enough in the title of one of his most important works. It is voiced in a peculiar form of journalism abetted by the Soviet government and represented best, perhaps, by a periodical the Russian title of which means The Godless at the Workbench. The details are so significant that, in spite of the fact that they are also harrowing, we shall set forth a few of them here. For the information implied we are indebted to the German review, Hochland. But though international censorship has pretty well confined the literary output of Bolshevism within its proper racial boundaries, examples and manifestations of it are sufficiently well known. Americans, it is true, have not been particularly interested in the matter for the reason that Leninism seems to them stupid and even, in a peculiar fashion, "behind the times." We shall see.

The Godless at the Workbench is a journal of humor and satiric propaganda which appears in about the format of our American Life or Judge, graced with coarse but powerfully suggestive drawings executed apparently by an artist of Anglo-Saxon origins. The text is supplied for the most part by the readers themselves—and it is, to borrow a popular word, some text. Within a comparatively short time the circulation has risen from 20,000 to 70,000 copies, indicating that it is not an esoteric weekly but an organ of opinion upon which the government proudly relies. And the purpose? A jubilee number of the journal thus stated it: "Obviously the workers (in whose throats priestcraft was stuck like a chunk of wood, thus preventing the assimilation of materialism) needed a destructive criticism of religion—a steel scraper for the cleansing of their skulls. They needed the printed word, a paper which step by step would carry on this task of sanitation." The method? First, an endless array of nasty and often indescribably filthy personalities in which the clergy and other religious persons are mentioned by name and scurrilously attacked. A hate which never seems quite human breathes in these bits of gossip and slander, contributed by people whose vanity is obviously tickled by the chance to appear in print. Second, a series of what we should term "letters to the editor," in which girls who have gone to the dogs lambast the morality of their parents, and the Russian equivalent for degenerate cake-eaters are permitted to discourse upon the ignominy of religion or the advisability of putting an end to priests by various forms of atrocious murder. Third, there is the more "scholarly" content—a number of articles which deal, for example, with the fact that science has discovered an island in which there is no belief in God because there is no society, or with the grim injustice of the British courts.

Lastly, however, there is the most important concern of this venture into gutter journalism. The encyclopaedists and other revolutionaries have vented their spleen in the face of God. But here the sacred person of Christ is represented in connections so scandalous and degrading that only a complete indifference to religion and history could keep a spectator from righteous indignation. Having seen some of the more perverse cartoons printed by The Godless at the Workbench, we agree with the experienced critic of Hochland in saying: "What this artist has accomplished in the way of scurrilities and blasphemies certainly surpasses anything hitherto seen." This work is not merely cheap, vulgar, and uninstructed. Here a real intellect has gone mad with hatred of the ineffable goodness of redemption. It is not a question of callous, indifferent unbelief: it is truly the expression of "the spirit who eternally denies." Small wonder that the editors—and incidentally the government which subsidizes them—should fume with wrath against those who refuse to join in their satanic fol-de-rol. Characteristically enough, they place the blame for the subsisting vitality of religion upon women, and then shirk no means of corrupting feminine fidelity and the little children over which it guards.

Here, then, is a magazine which may rightly be taken as a symbol of what is going on in a Russia once governed, as Stephen Graham has said, by the ideal of pilgrimage. In it there is no new, devastating attack upon the principles of Christian conviction —no fresh discovery or method, but only an outburst of vile and vulgar blasphemy matched by nothing except the obscure and carefully guarded records of diabolism. Optimistic souls who credit the Bolshevist movement with a change of tactics where religion is concerned might well take notice of the facts. It is, of course, true that if the unfortunate Russian populace had been more carefully shepherded by those who were given power to govern it, the way might never have been opened for the invasion of chaos. But now chaos is here. The danger of infection is very real, because the barriers of western civilization are not strong and secure. More important than that, however, is the duty to oppose, on the very ground where it is now operative, the tremendous infamy of materialistic scorn.

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THE COURSE OF CONVERSION

I. TRUTH AND TRADITION

By G. K. CHESTERTON

(This article by Mr. Chesterton is the first of a series of four, the second of which will appear in The Commonweal of October 27.—The Editors.)

IT would be very undesirable that modern men should accept Catholicism merely as a novelty; but it is a novelty. It does act upon its existing environment with the peculiar force and freshness of a novelty. Even those who denounce it generally denounce it as a novelty; as an innovation and not merely a survival. They talk of the "advanced" party in the Church of England; they talk of the "aggression" of the Church of Rome. Given any normal respectable Protestant family, Anglican or Puritan, in England or America, we shall find that Catholicism is actually for practical purposes treated as a new religion, that is, a revolution. It is not a survival. It is not in that sense an antiquity. It does not necessarily owe anything to tradition. In places where tradition can do nothing for it, in places where all the tradition is against it, it is intruding on its own merits; not as a tradition, but a truth. The father of some such Anglican or American Puritan family will find, very often, that all his children are breaking away from his own more or less Christian compromise (regarded as normal in the nineteenth century) and going off in various directions after various faiths or fashions which he would call fads. One of his sons will become a Socialist and hang up a portrait of Lenin; one of his daughters will become a Spiritualist and play with a planchette; another daughter will go over to Christian Science; and it is quite likely that another son will go over to Rome.

The point is, for the moment, that from the point of view of the father, and even, in a sense, of the family, all these things act after the manner of new religions, of great movements, of enthusiasms that carry young people off their feet and leave older people bewildered or annoyed. Catholicism indeed, even more than the others, is often spoken of as if it were actually one of the wild passions of youth. Optimistic aunts and uncles say that the youth will "get over it," as if it were a childish love affair or that unfortunate business with the barmaid. Darker and sterner aunts and uncles, perhaps at a rather earlier period, used actually to talk about it as an indecent indulgence, as if its literature were literally a sort of pornography. Newman remarks quite naturally, as if there were nothing odd about it at the time, that an undergraduate found with an ascetic manual or a book of monastic meditations was under a sort of cloud or taint, as having been caught with "a bad book" in his possession. He had been wallowing in the sensual pleasure of Nones or inflaming his lusts by contemplating an incorrect number of candles. It is, perhaps, no longer the custom to regard conversion as a form of dissipation; but it is still common to regard conversion as a form of revolt. And as regards the established convention of much of the modern world, it is a revolt. The worthy merchant of the middle-class, the worthy farmer of the Middle-West, when he sends his son to college, does not feel a faint alarm lest the boy should fall among thieves, in the sense of Communists; but he has the same sort of fear lest he fall among Catholics.

Now he has no fear lest he should fall among Calvinists. He has no fear that his children will become seventeenth-century Supralapsarians, however much he may dislike that doctrine. He is not even particularly troubled by the possibility of their adopting the extreme solfidian conceptions once common among some of the more extravagant Methodists. He is not likely to await with terror the telegram that will inform him that his son has become a Fifth-Monarchy man, any more than that he has joined the Albigensians. He does not exactly lie awake at night wondering whether Tom at Oxford has become a Lutheran any more than a Lollard. All these religions he dimly recognizes as dead religions; or, at any rate, as old religions. And he is only frightened of new religions. He is only frightened of those fresh, provocative, paradoxical new notions that fly to the young people's heads. But amongst these dangerous juvenile attractions he does class the freshness and novelty of Rome.

Now this is rather odd; because Rome is not so very new. Among these annoying new religions, one is rather an old religion; but it is the only old religion that is so new. When it was originally and really new, no doubt a Roman father often found himself in the same position as the Anglican or Puritan father. He, too, might find all his children going strange ways and deserting the household gods and the sacred temple of the capitol. He, too, might find that one of those children had joined the Christians in their Ecclesia and possibly in their Catacombs. But he would have found that, of his other children, one cared for nothing but the Mysteries of Orpheus, another was inclined to follow Mithras, another was a neo-Pythagorean who had learned vegetarianism from the Hindus, and so on.

Though the Roman father, unlike the Victorian father, might have the pleasure of exercising the patria potestas and cutting off the heads of all the heretics, he could not cut off the stream of all the heresies. Only

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by this time most of the streams have run rather dry. It is now seldom necessary for the anxious parent to warn his children against the undesirable society of the bull of Mithras, or even to wean him from the exclusive contemplation of Orpheus; and though we have vegetarians always with us, they mostly know more about proteids than about Pythagoras. But that other youthful extravagance is still youthful. That other new religion is once again new. That one fleeting fashion has refused to fleet; and that ancient bit of modernity is still modern. It is still to the Protestant parent now exactly what it was to the pagan parent then. We might say simply that it is a nuisance; but anyhow it is a novelty. It is not simply what the father is used to, or even what the son is used to. It is coming in as something fresh and disturbing, whether as it came to the Greeks who were always seeking some new thing, or as it came to the shepherds who first heard the cry upon the hills of the good news that our language calls the Gospel. We can explain the fact of the Greeks in the time of Saint Paul regarding it as a new thing, because it was a new thing. But who will explain why it is still as new to the last of the converts as it was to the first of the shepherds? It is as if a man 100 years old entered the Olympian games among the young Greek athletes; which would surely have been the basis of a Greek legend. There is something almost as legendary about the religion that is 2,000 years old now appearing as a rival of the new religions. That is what has to be explained and cannot be explained away; nothing can turn the legend into a myth. We have seen with our own eyes and heard with our own ears this great modern quarrel between young Catholics and old Protestants; and it is the first step to recognize in any study of modern conversion.

I am not going to talk about numbers and statistics, though I may say something about them later. The first fact to realize is a difference of substance which falsifies all the difference of size. The great majority of Protestant bodies today, whether they are strong or weak, are not strengthened in this particular fashion; by the actual attraction of their new followers to their old doctrines. A young man will suddenly become a Catholic priest, or even a Catholic monk, because he has a spontaneous and even impatient personal enthusiasm for the doctrine of Virginity as it appeared to Saint Catherine or Saint Clare. But how many men become Baptist ministers because they have a personal horror of the idea of an innocent infant coming unconsciously to Christ? How many honest Presbyterian ministers in Scotland really want to go back to John Knox, as a Catholic mystic might want to go back to John of the Cross? These men inherit positions they feel they can hold with reasonable consistency and general agreement; but they do inherit them. For them religion is tradition. We Catholics naturally do not sneer at tradition; but we say that in this case it is really tradition and nothing else. Not one man in a hundred of these people would ever have joined his present communion if he had been born outside it. Not one man in a thousand of them would have invented anything like his church formulas if they had not been laid down for him. None of them has any real reason for being in his own particular church, whatever good reason he may still have for being outside ours. In other words, the old creed of his communion has ceased to function as a fresh and stimulating idea. It is at best a motto or a war-cry and at the worst a catchword. But it is not meeting contemporary ideas like a contemporary idea. In their time and in their turn, we believe that those other contemporary ideas will also prove their mortality by having also become mottoes and catchwords and traditions.

A century or two hence, Spiritualism may be a tradition, Socialism may be a tradition, Christian Science may be a tradition. But Catholicism will not be a tradition. It will be a nuisance and a new and dangerous thing. It is already beginning to appear as the only champion of reason in the twentieth century, as it was the only champion of tradition in the nineteenth. We know that the higher mathematics is trying to deny that two and two make four and the higher mysticism to imagine something that is beyond good and evil. Amid all these anti-rational philosophies, ours will remain the only rational philosophy. In the same spirit, the Church did, indeed, point out the value of tradition to a time which treated it as quite valueless. The nineteenth-century neglect of tradition and mania for mere documents were altogether nonsensical. They amounted to saying that men always tell lies to children but men never make mistakes in books. But though our sympathies are traditional because they are human, it is not that part of the things which stamps it as divine. The mark of the Faith is not tradition; it is conversion—the miracle by which men find truth in spite of tradition.

It is with the nature of this process that I propose to deal; and it is difficult to deal with it without introducing something of a personal element. My own is only a very trivial case, but naturally it is the case I know best; and I shall be compelled in the pages that follow to take many illustrations from it. I have therefore thought it well to put first this general note on the nature of the movement in my time; to show that I am well aware that it is a very much larger and even a very much later movement than is implied in describing my own life or generation. I believe it will be more and more an issue for the rising generation and for the generation after that, as they discover the actual alternative in the awful actualities of our time. And Catholics, when they stand up together and sing Faith of Our Fathers, may realize that they might well be singing Faith of Our Children. And, in many cases, the return has been so recent as almost to deserve the description of a children's crusade.

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THIS MAY AMUSE YOU

A PREFACE: FOR ALMOST ANY BOOK

By MICHAEL WILLIAMS

NOT long ago—in fact, it was today—a friend told me that he was to lunch with a publisher. Being suddenly and violently possessed by that desire of seizing all opportunities for pushing one's personal interests which (I am told) is the secret of the success of millionaires, chorus girls, politicians, best-sellers, and thieves, and which moves even me about once a lustrum, I said to my friend: "If the chance offers, please tell your publisher that I, too, have a new book coming along. He may be interested."

My friend (even so good a friend) looked dubious, perhaps also a little nettled. He has a book of his own on the stocks. But he generously promised to do what I asked. Then he added: "His first question will be, how long is the book?"

"H'm," I said, "what length does he prefer?"

"Sixty thousand words."

"By a singular coincidence my book will be 60,000 words when it is finished."

"And its title?"

"This May Amuse You."

"Possibly, but why?"

"Well, I hope it may, for that will be its title, and a book really should live up to its title, if it can."

"Oh, I see. Well, it's not so bad a title; there are many worse ones. What's the book about?"

"Things that may amuse you."

"Yes, but what things?"

"You'll have to wait for the book itself to answer that question."

"Very well. I'll wait."

He will have to wait for some time. For I am only now beginning the book. The notion of doing so popped into my head while my friend was telling me about his luncheon engagement with the publisher. I had often before flirted with the idea; in that moment I married it.

At this point I turn directly to you, my readers, you who (I hope) are now reading me, but more especially you twice-to-be-praised ones who may tell others to read me, you who are the dearly beloved of all writers because you are the heart and the soul of their public, the makers and keepers of their cult, and even sometimes the providers of their bread and butter, to you, I say, I turn, and I put a question in your mouth. You say to me: "But why do you tell us all this stuff about why and how you began your book?"

Helpful question! It gives me an opportunity to explain that what I am setting before you now is the preface to my book—and if one cannot write, just as one likes, about one's own book in a preface, thus whipping up an appetite (if one is successful) for the book itself, what in the world is the use of a preface? Which surely ought to be the hors d'oeuvre and the cocktail before dinner.

But perhaps I mistake your meaning; it may be that you wish to know why I should write a book (never mind the preface) this book or any other. If so, dear reader, you might just as well ask me why does anybody write any books at all? Adequately to answer such a question (which has been asked by so many readers and writers since the consideration of the same problem depressed poor Solomon, and which has been satisfactorily answered by no one, so that still, as in his time, of the making of books there is no end under the sun, in saecula saeculorum) to answer such a question, I say, would be just as easy (that is, it would be just as hard) as to tell you why I am writing this one. Nevertheless, I will try. For to do so may help me on with this preface.

First, let me see if I myself know why I am writing this book. Is it because I have a message to give to the world? No, not in this book anyhow; perish the thought! If this book is to be at all in keeping with my idea, it ought to be an amusement for me to write and for you to read. Am I, then, simply compelled to write it by an irresistible inspiration? Not by a long shot! True, I have carried the idea in my head for years; I have thought of at least six titles for it; I have made notes; I have begun it several times, and then gave up the job; some day, I have said to myself a hundred times, some day I shall have to write that book—but such vacillating impulses are not the voice of the divine muse, Inspiration. No, certainly not. What I heard was merely the voice which every writer knows so well—the voice of his laziness, of his irresoluteness, of his perverse desire when he thinks of something to write, to put off the actual toil of his craft as long as possible. Of course, there are other writers. Or so I have heard, I have never met them. Writers who cheerfully and persistently work, day after day after day on into the unnumbered years—who do not merely dream, but work!

When I was young and learning my trade, Flaubert was greatly admired (for I belonged to the generation that thought highly of style: le mot juste, and the ivory tower mood). We not only worshipped Flaubert's work, we violently praised (even when we did not precisely live up to) his mode of work—days and weeks of laboring on a paragraph: words cut and polished, colored subtly through deft arrangements, tautologies tirelessly hunted down to be exterminated

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through page after page. Walter Pater—with his almost equally toilsome patience and scrupulous artistry—also was an idol. Balzac, ruining his constitution with coffee to keep awake and his fortunes by the cost of his incessant correcting of his printers' proofs, he, too, belonged to the Pantheon of Prose. But when I found out that writers whose style was at least as charming (even in the same mode) as the best of Flaubert or Pater followed no such methods, but simply wrote down what they had to say (having things worth while the saying) and there was an end (and a good one) of the matter, I gave up the cult of Flaubert, Pater, Balzac, George Moore, Henry James, and all the other constipates. Gautier wrote Mlle. de Maupin, and a dozen of other books, without needing to correct one page in a score, in the print-shop between dinner and the opera, the compositors snatching away each sheet as it left his fluent pen.

For myself, if I can manage to get to the end of that minimum number of words which some publisher will consider necessary to make a book (and if those words are of a sort he will judge to be sufficiently interesting to justify the gambling of enough of his capital to print and bind and peddle the things in numbers providing him his profit) it will only be by dint of using up heaps of time that I might use much more agreeably doing lots of other less laborious things. Moreover, I shall only get to the end of the job by whipping myself along, screwing myself up to creation pitch, undergoing the nuisance of chronic nervous irritability and inflicting the sad results thereof on many innocent victims—in short, I shall find again as many times before, that dreaming about a book is a delectable thing, but writing one is the deuce and all of a job.

Then, is it for money that I undertake it? Indeed, I hope I shall make some money by it, and this hope will help me over some of the many hard places and spots of slow-going that I will meet as I proceed; but hope (especially money hope) is like Mistress Fortune herself, fair but frail and often false; I don't trust her, though I know her charm; I know her charm but all too well, and her sweet enchantments, her magic which may be white but is often black, or, what is worse, merely grey.

Well, then, if I have no message to deliver, and if I am not impelled by the madness of inspiration, and if my expectations of cash (as well as those concerned with glory) are dubious to a degree, still the question stands: Why do I write?

Reader, you annoy me. Let me ask you something in my turn. What was the answer to the question Oedipus asked the Sphinx? Where is Charley Ross? Who struck Billy Patterson? Who was the Man in the Iron Mask? Where are the snows of yesteryear?

Answer me, and I will answer you; but you do not know the answers, you cannot tell me nor can I tell you. All I know is that there are moods and memories of my life that I must (as best I may) invoke once more, and chronicle, sharing them with those who may be interested, or amused, or moved by things, people, places, and happenings that I have known and loved or feared or enjoyed or disliked. Most men and women lead a double life, one of action and of the exterior, the other of memory and reflection; but the writer's life is three-fold. To the life of action and that of memory and reflection he adds a third sort of life, namely, the recording of his actions and of his memories and moods. Even when he uses the masks and scenery of what is called fiction, he himself lives and moves behind all the masks and all the scenes he may invent. And his inescapable desire to give forth once more in words his memories and his moods, plainly and openly, or partially transformed as fiction or drama, essays or poetry, this desire of his is formed of that mysterious inborn thing which is in each son and daughter of Adam, but which not all of them (perhaps not most in these our bewildered modern days) are conscious of, the thing that we call vocation. Happy and fortunate is that man or woman who really knows what he or she wants to do, and knowing, is able to do it, and, being able, does it! There are men and women who must write, just as there are others who must paint, or carve wood, or build houses, or dig in the earth, or sail the seas, or sit in laboratories; this is what they are born to do, and if thwarted by circumstances, they will be unhappy all their days, no matter what riches, or fame, or glory, or even what happy love may come to them. And that's all there is, in my opinion, to the writing of of a book, this or any other; bad books or good books.

So I know that although I hate to work, work I must till I have written down, somehow or other, these moods and memories. Some, I fear, will be bruised and broken in the process. How shall I ever be able to tell the real story of that night under the stars on a California hill when I saw the moon bow over the sea? How shall I capture the grotesque thrill of the adventure of the man in the valley of walnut trees who could put out fire merely by looking at it? How may I conjure up the true quality of that mystic mood I knew that morning on the coast of Mexico when I sailed in a boat out of a mist and suddenly saw three palm trees above slow surf breaking on a waste of sand? Then there is the story of the man who prayed for death and how death answered him—and many, many others.

But enough—perhaps there is more than enough—of this palavering! After all, is this preface anything other than one more effort to delay the task-work of writing the book?

I wonder! I do not know. Neither will you unless or until I really do write the book. In that case, the preface will become really an introduction—on that day I may say: "Dear reader, meet my book! I hope it will amuse you."

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THE CONCLUSIONS OF MAX SCHELER

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

THERE was hardly time or space at the Sixth International Congress of Philosophy for anything like glimpses of what the separate nations are thinking. And yet it would have been most interesting to compare, at least flittingly, the position of German speculation since the close of the war with, say, the drift of French metaphysics away from Bergson. It would have been interesting if only because such samples as we have are illusory if it be supposed they give a definite impression of the sum-total. One hopes that Coué fooled nobody into thinking that the Sorbonne had committed itself en masse to auto-suggestion—although the Sorbonne, historically speaking, has done worse. German thinkers have been somewhat more satisfactorily represented. Between psychoanalysis, the diaries of Keyserling and theosophy, some echoes of other movements have slipped through. But it is peculiar that the doctrine of Max Scheler, formulated as it was in the hope of creating a view of life adequate to an era which has followed an over-academic and supra-capitalistic time, should have gone practically unnoticed.

Scheler, sociologist, psychologist, and something of an artist (in daily life he serves as professor of philosophy and sociology at the University of Cologne) came to the fore as an apostle of ethics with the publication of Vom Ewigen im Menschen. This book was intimately affiliated with the life and ideals of war-time; in it a singular nobility was unmistakable; and there seemed to leap from its pages something like a new reason for human hope. As a consequence, it was really an important and attractive book. "It took him longer than most men to find himself," says Mr. Brooks apologetically of John Addington Symonds, "because his niche in the universe was more essential to him than his niche in the world." Here is detected and admirably defined the slowing-up process which has robbed many very fine minds in our time of their momentum. Systems of thought spun out either by Kant or the biologists did little more than impel men to opposite and equally unsatisfying poles—mind which cannot believe in matter, and matter which cannot believe in mind. The really great achievement of this philosophy was the proof that God speaks only faintly in syllogisms. Against it Scheler appeared as a rebel.

It was not so much that he taught a new moral philosophy, as that he taught moral philosophy in a new way. My present purpose is to comment briefly upon this way. Let us observe, in the first place, that the Scheler method is based upon what has been termed "phenomenalistic" thinking. Edmund Husserl's studies in logic had attacked the subjective views of Kant by insisting upon the reality of both subject and object as present to the perceiving mind. Our "attentiveness" to any "thing" is the source of our knowledge concerning it; "sight," in both its sensory and metaphysical aspects, not reasoning, is the basic means by which we arrive at truth. From this, two statements were drawn by Husserl. First, there are a number of fundamental realities upon which all our reasoning rests and which, nevertheless, we cannot prove; the axioms of mathematics and logic are some of these and are accepted confidently, not because we can demonstrate their truth, but because we see they are true. In the second place, objects revealed to our consciousness force recognition of certain qualities based on them, but not logically deducible from them.

Thus, for example, my perception of a green tree leads me to a knowledge of the "green" present there—a "green" which is not a thing, not an object, but the quality of a thing. This I learn to know, not by any process of reasoning, but by simple, plain sight. Next, from my statement, "This is a green tree," I may proceed to a recognition of "green" independent of any object and capable of comparison with other beings of the same class, "red," for instance. If we now observe that "green" is something which cannot be defined, which is not an object with its own separate entity, and which is nevertheless actually known to all men who can see, we realize that our knowledge in this case is, just as in connection with fundamental axioms of thought, based on sight. It must be true then, thought Husserl, that our knowledge of reality comes, not through categories as Kant declared, nor through association as the mechanists have averred, but through actual, active contact, through sight. If so, what is this "sight"?

The great service of Max Scheler has been to interpret this term in the realm of human conduct. Just as Husserl had based his views upon natural science and emphasized the reality of qualities, so Scheler has planted his doctrine four-square upon empiric and non-formal psychology. Qualities, in the ethical sense, are the moral "values" or hues of good and evil; they also are not independent things, but nevertheless exist as objective beings knowable to us. We do not arrive at a knowledge of them by processes of reasoning, but by a kind of spiritual sight which Scheler terms "feeling." To indicate more clearly what this word means in ethics, he distinguishes between four varieties of feeling normal to men. These are: first, feelings which are localized in the organism; second, feelings which are proper to the whole organism and its centre of vitality, such as the sensations of health and sickness, of vitality and weakness; third, the spir-

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itual feelings, directly attached to the ego, and functionally attached to objects recognized as existing, present to the mind, and visualized—sorrow, for instance; fourth, feelings which are purely metaphysical and of the soul, the feelings of holiness—attached to the deepest centre of the spiritual personality taken as an indivisible whole; for instance, blessedness, despair, remorse of conscience, and peace.

The first two varieties of feeling exist, as Aristotle said, to express by the alternative of pleasure-pain that something is either beneficial or harmful to life. The second two exist, says Scheler, "to reveal to us the increasing perfection or lessening worth of our spiritual person, the moral destination and individual basic trend of which are, to a large extent, independent of our animal being." Although, therefore, there is a sharp gulf between feeling that is physical and feeling that is spiritual, both lead us to the knowledge of objective reality which is not discovered by the reason —however much we may syllogize later on—and both are purposeful in the sense that they guard and promote what is essential to our well-being. "All the sorrows and sufferings of creatures," says Scheler by way of illustration, "have a meaning, at least an objective meaning."

Hereupon is based Scheler's attitude toward religious belief. Modernistic attempts to account for religion by one version or another of the theory that it is something demanded by man to satisfy a "metaphysical urge," all led to the ridiculous conclusion that "man has created God in the likeness of man." What, then, is religion?, Scheler asks, taking it simply as something which exists, and endeavoring to analyze both its subjective and objective aspects. Returning to his account of the "feelings," he finds that the one thing which mankind has always most deeply and awesomely reverenced, during its religious hours, is, what is holy. Just as we see green or feel sorrow, for reasons intimately bound up both with the reality of objective things and our own needs, so also do we, in a very much more profound and important manner, see what is holy. It is a "sight" which we cannot account for entirely by ratiocination because, like the axioms or the colors, it is to some extent independent of ratiocination. Naturally, we do not visualize it so directly as we do sensory knowledge, for the reason that we cannot grasp it as completely as God Himself, the Being in whom holiness is fully present. We see only through the veil of finite things, and so, darkly. It is, therefore, the "holy hour," the "hours of Christ" as Dostoyevsky calls them, which intensify our recognition of what is holy and of God. Only after we have seen the reality which is qualitatively the object of religion, says Scheler, can we use other proofs to substantiate the existence of God.

Naturally, one cannot indicate in a brief comment the coherence upon which this arrival at spiritual faith is based. In the background, the reader must try to see an impressive wealth of psychological observation and insight. Those who know Newman's Grammar of Assent will, however, be struck by the manner in which what Scheler has written reinforces the Cardinal's argument from conscience. In both there is present, though more explicitly in the German philosopher's case, the conviction that religion is based very truly upon man's recognition of the holy, and his need for it because of his own sinfulness. The two resemble each other in still another striking way. This is the so-called "primate of love": and since not only is it central in Scheler's thought, but also the subject of one of his best essays, some hurried attention to it would seem to be in order.

What is the place which love—the eager, active will—occupies in the realm of ethical knowledge? Beginning with da Vinci's statement that "Every great love is the daughter of a great perception" and Pascal's maxim, "Love and understanding are one and the same," Scheler proceeds to prove that our appreciation of ethical values increases as we view them in the act of love, simply because of all the qualities attached to the person, love is the highest and, therefore, the most valuable. God is not only most understandable to us when we search for Him in love, but in turn He Himself is distinguished above all for the quality of infinite affection. It follows, accordingly, that our natural relationships with Him are, not those of servants who must obey a command, but rather those of lovers who see in Him all perfection, all beauty. In pursuing this line of thought, Scheler is close to (though he pushes somewhat afar) the doctrine of the Catholic mystics. He himself lays reverent stress upon the ideas of Saint Augustine: in the great Carthaginian Doctor alone, he says, can be found the attempt "to formulate the basic Christian experience of the relationships between religious love and understanding, in connection with problems not religious."

It is evident that up until this point the system of Scheler, although primarily a philosophy of method and not of objectivity, had come close to certain problems of great importance to the scholastics. He himself called attention to Saint Thomas in several instances, thus drawing a pertinent parallel between the mediaeval schools and the "phenomenalistic" groups. Naturally, this encouraged the belief that through Scheler and his friends the philosophia perennis was to be aided in solving difficult problems of psychology and epistemology, especially since they dealt with religion in so traditional and even Catholic a sense. But it is the curse of Germany that philosophic movements there tend to assume more than a little of esoteric quality. Scheler announced that only those who had been thoroughly trained in his method could use it to advantage. Because the object was to consider "being" rather than here-and-now reality, a definite gift for contemplation remained a prerequisite.

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This gift, however, soon became a proudly guarded treasure—"a proof," as Theodore Haecker declared, "that, of course, philosophy has more right to be dogmatic than religion." The Scheler who had approached so near to traditional Christianity in Vom Ewigen im Menschen later took refuge in an ethical point of view perilously similar to oriental mysticism. What once seemed likely to prove an important "conversion" was deflected, for reasons which no one can determine. Yet, even so, it seems to me that this man's work is, apologetically, a very useful deposit. While laboring as a thinker, knee-deep in the stream of modern thought, he found ways of expressing once more, and in words of remarkable freshness, many opinions which Christians have sponsored over and over again until the antique armor in which they were clothed seemed dull and out-of-date; he brought the science of psychology gently into line with the great truths of religious conviction; and he dared, while keeping his position as a savant, to look out upon the world as the fresh and colorful creation of God, and not as a series of dusty deductions.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF CHAOS

By THEODORE F. MACMANUS

(This is the second of two articles by Mr. MacManus, the first of which was published in The Commonweal of October 13.—The Editors.)

WHAT I said in a previous article about the principle of chaos was a rapid-fire sketch, but not a highly colored one. The pursuit of the subject leads into a thousand blind alleys and by-ways, and always it encounters hosts of humanity warped and spoiled by wrong thinking—running the gamut of human relations from the multifarious functions of the home to the devious and sometimes devilish machinations of statecraft, following always the same dreadful deification of the human with the same dire and dreadful result.

Never was the process consummated in a more easily recognizable type than the exhibit of warped humanity which directed militaristic ideals of Prussia in the world war—and yet it went unrecognized for what it was. The world did not see it, and will deny it with curses today, because the same sort of education has its echo in other superior lands which boast of their Christianity. These lands, too, have their Nietzsches and their Haeckels and would, if they possessed the courage of their convictions, drive these convictions to deductions just as deadly to humanity and just as destructive to the rights of man as the philosophy of the infidel servant and the blind, brutal military overlord.

An echo of the same philosophy—a first faint, far-off trending toward the same brutal ideal—is with us in America today in the misguided clamor for centralized, bureaucratic control of education, with its inevitable still further elimination of the slightest trace of religious influence. It is clearer still in the very newspaper of a recent morning in the dictum of a university president who declares that the student of the future must be carefully selected from a preferred class—the remainder to be declared unfit for entrance and barred from the sacred halls of learning. The product of the colleges and universities has fallen below par, so an artificial standard must be established and a system of selection and rejection put in operation in this land of freedom and democracy. This same college president is the very fruit, flower and culmination of the sectarian system. He is by way of being an advocate of birth control for the same reason that he is an advocate of student selection. The human product is exhibiting unfortunate animalistic tendencies—not as a result of sectarianism, of course, but because the individual intellect is still "restrained and hampered." The average must be lifted and he proposes to lift it, not by inculcating virtue in the individual, but by applying the hydraulic pressure of birth control and student selection and lifting the entire mass. He tells us, moreover, that the youth of the nation is in revolt—somebody or something is always rebelling and revolting under the sectarian system—and for the ten-thousandth time utters the old platitudinous parrot-cry in telling why they are in revolt!

They are hampered by fundamentalism—which blindfolds the eyes, and shackles the mind and restrains individual action. And so with one sublime gesture, he would confer on them still fuller academic and selective freedom and for fear that will not suffice, sift and sort them out and raise the standard of quality by eugenics and a caste system of student selection.

This is the sort of sublime idiocy issuing out of the most eminent mouths and minds impregnated with the individualistic theory of life and society—filling the front pages of the newspapers and, under gentler and more cultured guise, monopolizing the pages of our so-called highbrow magazines. The test of it all is so simple and so easy that it is ludicrous. Pick up any book or any magazine containing the reflections of a college professor, preacher, or scientist and try, if you can, to discover one who writes to a definite conclusion—who offers a clear-cut solution, or who is not befuddled, hopeless, pessimistic, anti-Christian, and still singing the old everlasting song of freedom, more freedom, and still more freedom.

Unless a man orders and operates his life according

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to sanctions outside and above and beyond himself, his spirit sinks like a stone into the dull, ignoble daily routine of earthly existence. He cannot so order his life by merely eliciting from his inner self acts whose only validation is a personal opinion. No matter how ardent and earnest may be his idealisms, they will not bear the test in the mass of men of personal, practical, every-day application. It is precisely in these dull, daily duties that men fail. A purely human code of ethics is like an inflated gas-bag which buoys a man up for brief and thrilling emotional flights. It is quickly punctured when it comes into sharp and piercing contact with the rough and unromantic requirements of social, domestic, business, and spiritual life.

Spiritual growth and development requires of a man that he do the things which he does not want to do. It is beyond his own unaided powers to put this principle into practice. Relying solely upon his own interpretations and his own strength, it is inevitable that he shall construct a code which accommodates itself to his weaknesses.

There is no need of debating this question academically. The pragmatic test provides the proof. This is what will happen when the individual pursues the principle of self-determination, because it is precisely what does happen—not necessarily in the last living individual, but in the vast and overwhelming majority of them, today, yesterday, tomorrow, in all lands, at all times, in all climes, and under all circumstances.

The sectarian mass is not governed by its ethical or idealistic uproarings, but by the call of convention and convenience which is the call of the flesh. The spirit of individual decision is quite obviously a spirit of revolt. It is quite obviously a spirit which makes a virtue out of necessity, and the necessity in this case is personal convenience and indulgence. If it becomes inconvenient to practise a virtue, the virtue is legislated out of existence and a substitute virtue takes its place which permits the personal indulgence and renders it sinless and respectable.

It is not necessary to prove these assertions. They are proven. Society today is a network of surrenders in so far as the ancient Christian standards of conduct are concerned. The conveniences substituted by modern life scarcely produce a qualm of doubt and uncertainty. They are justified as economic necessities. Their most enthusiastic exponents are the fortunate and the presumably intellectual. The pulpits touch them gingerly. The university professor applauds them openly. Private judgment is in the saddle in both cases. Frequently, the pulpiteer and the professor join hands in public. Much more often they agree in private. The mass is tainted too. But the taint was handed down from above. Everybody who is anybody is liberal now. The hand that holds the surgeon's scalpel does not hesitate to exercise the laws of lordship over life and death. It does not scruple to enter the domain of morals and render a decision under the new code of social convenience and economic necessity.

There is probably no slightest hint of suspicion in the mind of any sectarian scholar laboring today in laboratory, library or school, that he is not an absolutely free agent, whose findings are untainted by any ulterior or distracting element. Religion with him is usually so remote from the subject of his research, so thin and attenuated a thread in the warp and woof of his thought, that he would be apt to reject with indignation the suggestion that it might color or control his scholarship.

And yet, it is as plain a fact on the face of society as is the nose on his distinguished countenance, that the entire body of sectarian scholarship today bears the unmistakable stamp of its origin, both in content and in conclusions. As long as it deals merely with objective things—with the physical sciences, in particular—modern research is filled with as fine and fiery a zeal for accuracy as the world of study has ever known. It is not necessary to catalogue its triumphs because all men know them, and in these instances the fatal taint of sectarianism leaves the intellectual product unmarred.

But the moment the investigator enters upon the domain of man, the inscrutable, the process of inhibition begins to maifest itself. The long and honorable roster of savants whose names have graced the sciences and the arts for the past several centuries, comprehends a list of distinguished men whose output is just as unmistakable in its protestantism or infidelity as they accuse the alternative school of being mediaeval, scholastic, and reactionary. The scholastic, the sectarian feels, is cribbed, cabined, and confined by his superstitions. He, the agnostic, has no superstitions. Therefore, his scholarship is free to scour the sciences for truth.

This is the innocent myopia of which we have spoken, which befogs the world today. If there be superstition or prior commitment to a conception in the one case, there is a superstition infinitely more coarse and brutal, and a prior commitment infinitely more warping, in the other. The one is at least couched in terms of nobility and beauty and bears no results which are not also noble and beautiful. The other inevitably degrades and brutalizes the image of man. It inevitably divides its members and destroys its votaries and its victims—the unschooled and unlettered mass. Its output is not merely of a standardized sameness in all of the arts and all of the sciences, but they are of a standardized monotony in the type of thinking which they produce. The rotarian intellect is not rotarian primarily because it is a middle-class mind of restricted observation and experience. The rotarian is a rotarian because he is the heir and product of several centuries of strictly sectarian, mediocre thinking.

It is well-nigh incredible that the general mind can

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have escaped a realization of the universal ugliness which has issued out of religious individualism. Every single social aberration, insanity or inanity which has manifested itself in several hundred years has borne the birthmark of irrational sectarian thinking. Almost invariably, those follies and tragedies have been proudly proclaimed as great progressive movements. Individual sectarian action is frequently simple, sane, and sweet. Mass action is nearly always banal, grotesque, and unlovely. It has produced millions of lopsided mentalities, whose social experiments have almost invariably gone awry, because they have laid too much or too little emphasis on this, that or the other tendency in human nature.

That is perhaps one of the most destructive phases of the sectarian outlook—that it chloroforms the sensibilities, destroys the sense of values, blunts the perceptions, and lowers the standards, not merely of the mass, but of those who in other respects might be called cultured.

In one breath, it clamors for the separation of church and state—in the next, deifies the state by erecting the principle of the divine right of kings, or the divine right of the people. It is so ignorant of its own operations that, in spite of most recent history in England and Germany, it interprets the divine right of kings as a mediaeval philosophy. Failing—as it always fails—to lift the morals of the mass, it invariably turns to the state for aid, and endeavors to enforce virtue by legislation, as in the attempts to prohibit liquor, and the more recent attempt to prohibit learning.

This manifestation, of course, is not an espousal of the divine right of kings, but of the divine rights of man, as first proclaimed by Rousseau, and reasserted from protestant pulpits in ten thousand varied and varying forms ever since. In criminology, the relegation of the moral responsibility to group or individual interpretation logically ultimates in lynch law. In the administration of law, the sectarian professes a pious belief that his courts are sanctioned from on high. Actually, he tends more and more toward a contempt of courts and the origin of their power, and may yet refer all of their decisions to a referendum. Instinctively, naturally and necessarily, he is "against" authority, whether it be in the courts, in his executives, in his home, or in himself.

In matters of sex, the sectarian spirit has induced the almost universal adoption of condonance of contraception. Marriage, it has, of course, stripped of everything savoring of the supernatural and the sacramental—reducing it, as it is rapidly reducing every other human relation, to the mood and the whim of the individual.

In literature—having no solution for the riddle of life—it concerns itself with phases and aspects, and the relations of individuals, rarely with life itself, and the conclusions of life. In poetry—it gravitates between the sweetly sentimental and the abstruse and incoherent.

Like sectarian religion, sectarian literature is in deadly fear of conclusions. It can tell what happened to a group by reason of social conditions, but it cannot tell what created the conditions, or how they are to be cured. Only the occasional master, like Conrad, has running through all of his works the ominous note of a common doom of humanity when wedded to the earth. In art, the most recent and triumphant expression is a complete contempt of form and a descent into chaos, which leaves the on-looker bewildered and hopeless of interpretation.

If sectarianism ever has the courage to confront itself with its own colossal and tragic failures and admit that they involve the annihilation of existing civilization, only two courses are open. It must either maintain the sufficiency of churchlessness and creedlessness when properly administered for the salvation of society, or go over to Rome en masse. It will never do the latter, and so, humanly speaking, there is no solution. If society is dependent for its salvation upon the Christian dispensation and the sectarian idea is to dominate and be carried to its last anarchic conclusion, then society is indubitably doomed.

HOW THE GARDEN GREW

By F. M. VERRALL

IN THE monks' herb gardens of early mediaeval times originated the art of present-day gardening. The monastery had to heal bodies as well as souls in those turbulent days, and the practice of medicine presupposed a good working knowledge of herb-growing. Indeed, an early school of medicine which was started by the Benedictines of Monte Cassion, can be looked on as the precursor of our great modern botanic gardens.

The earliest records of gardens—after the days of imperial Rome—are of those belonging to ninth-century monasteries in what is now France or Switzerland—Saint-Maurice, Saint-Germain des Prés, Saint-Amande, and Saint-Gall; and of this last a fully detailed ground plan still exists. It shows the cloister garden for the use of the community in the centre; the physic garden with its beds of sixteen kinds of medicinal herbs; the kitchen garden laid out in nine long narrow beds for the cultivation of pot herbs; and the cemetery which was burying-ground and orchard in one. A peaceful God's Acre it must have been, with graves separated by shrubs, and its fifteen fruit trees, of which even the names are given. Charlemagne ordered herbs to be planted in the imperial gardens in the year 812, and it is interesting to note that the plants on his list correspond closely with those of Saint-Gall.

In England, there is another ancient chart—a perspective plan of Canterbury monastery gardens. There is also clear evidence in English monastery records that corn, vines, and fruit trees were grown in the tenth century. As in the continental gardens, there were not many different varieties of small plants and flowers. Roses, lilies, poppies and a few other flowers crept into the herb gardens, but only because of their supposed medicinal qualities.

In the twelfth century, both Bishop Grossetete, of Lincoln,

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and Alexander Neckham, abbot of Cirencester, wrote about plants—the first in relation to medicine; while Neckham included a list of plants suitable for a "noble garden," still principally herbs, though peonies, daffodils, and violets were added to the roses and lilies of an earlier day.

As to the actual management of the grounds, all the gardens, vineyards, orchards, moats, and fish-ponds, were under the care of an officer—the gardinarius or hortulanus—who arranged for labor, bought any necessary cuttings or seeds, sold the surplus cider or verjuice (raw grape juice) and kept accounts.

The accounts of a large monastery, such as Norwich Priory or Abingdon Abbey, show that within the monastery walls there were other small gardens besides those for the cloister and the visitors. The abbot or prior, the treasurer, the precentor, the infirmarian, and the sacristan, all had separate gardens, for which they paid a small rent to the gardinarius. The infirmarian grew medicinal herbs in his plot near the hospital, while the sacristan raised flowers for the altar.

Parish church and private chapel frequently had these sacristans' gardens. Henry VI, founder of Eton College, left "thirty-eight feet of land between the wall of the church and the wall of the cloyster, to sett certain trees and flowers behovable and convenient for the services of the same church."

But for a great feast day, sacristans were not always able to grow enough flowers to adorn the altars, shrines, candles, and statues; or to garland the clerics who were to walk in the processions, so that flowers often had to be bought. Certain flowers were popular for certain days—red roses for the feast of Corpus Christi (in 1524 they cost six pence at St. Martin Outwich) broom for Easter (one pence) palm on Palm Sunday (two pence) woodruff and lavender for Saint Barnabas day. The prices do not seem to have been exorbitant, but in London, at any rate, there could have been no difficulty in buying flowers, for Saint Thomas à Becket's clerk, Fitzstephen, wrote that the citizens of London had fair and pleasant gardens; while as early as 1300, there was so much produce raised in London that the gardeners meeting to sell their wares near Saint Paul's were a nuisance to the churchgoers.

With the suppression of the monasteries, the monks' gardens were destroyed wholesale. Soon after, the promoters of the Reformation discouraged the lavish use of flowers in church, and a new sort of garden, the "garden of pleasure"—the purely ornamental plots of Parkinson and Rea—took the place of those of sacristan and infirmarian which had been humbler and less decorative, yet dedicated for centuries to the glory of God and the service of man.

I Shall Try to Pretend

I shall try to pretend there are thousands of years ahead
And we'll be together every hour of them all,
So I need not fear lest something should go unsaid,
Nor snatch at the moment's power, lest a dearth befall.

There will be time for laughter and lazy talk,
And passionate baring of all our intense beliefs,
Sharing of wind and sun and rain as we walk,
Sharing of hopes and fears and of joys and griefs.

—I shall try to pretend . . . but all the while I shall know
That the time is shortening fast, that was brief at best,
And the moment will soon arrive when you must go,
Leaving the unsaid words . . . and the old unrest.

NORA B. CUNNINGHAM.

COMMUNICATIONS

AN ECONOMIC CHALLENGE

Bourbonnais, Ill.

TO the Editor:—Mr. Stephen Du Brul, in the issue of The Commonweal of September 22, evidently thinks he has issued a challenge to Catholic thinkers on economic and social problems, who are not satisfied with the existing economic order, which they cannot meet. He has quite unconsciously put into concrete terms the arguments that they have been using for many years. The case he instances is not an indictment of the critics of the existing economic order, but it is a very serious indictment of prevailing economic conditions. If Mr. Du Brul insists upon defending the present economic system as he has done so eloquently and forcefully on so many occasions, it is his business to crack the economic nut he has found, not those who think the present system is sadly in need of reform.

No doubt, the ordinary employer, when he meets attacks for not paying living wages, says, "What can I do about it?" One thing he usually does and that is, defends the existing economic order which is forcing him in the supposed case to commit an act of injustice by paying less than living wages, and frequently opposes legislative measures for the amelioration of the working-classes. Every serious student of these problems recognizes, of course, that the average employer is just as much a victim of an unsound and irrational economic system as the working-man. The mystery is why Mr. Du Brul and the average employer think it necessary to defend such a system. An economic system which does not enable a necessary industry to pay living wages to the workers is by that very fact convicted of inadequacy and incompetence. If we had a social or political system which, as a necessary condition of existence, at times compelled men to murder or commit any other crime, all right opinion would oppose it, and Catholic opinion would be unanimous. Yet, upon Mr. Du Brul's own confession, we have an economic system which at times compels employers, as a necessary condition of existence, to pay less than a living wage which is, without any question, a sin of injustice. Why, then, should Catholic employers defend such a system? Would it not be better to advocate industrial democracy or some other improvement of the existing order?

REV. J. W. R. MAGUIRE, C.S.V.

GOD AND MAMMON

Denton, Texas.

TO the Editor:—A Catholic missionary in Alaska uttered these ponderous words: "I guess the Lord loved me too much to give me the trouble of caring for gold." Are there not many Americans who will call that self-sacrificing missionary a fool? Is he a fool? What is the main cause of the discontent and unhappiness in the world today? Why is it so difficult to procure peace? Is it not because the world is crushed by the Golden Calf? The dollar is god, not only in this country, but the world over. Indeed, Mammon is the most cruel tyrant. When will the world believe the words of Christ, "You cannot serve God and Mammon"? The world does not serve God, but Mammon today. What are the consequences? Open your eyes and see. Can the world be more chaotic than it is today? Let the world be disloyal to Mammon and loyal to God—then all will be well.

REV. RAYMOND VERNIMONT.

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POEMS

City Virginal

On the feast of thy nativity
There came a white Dove unto me,
As I walked in the blue noontide
In autumn by the riverside,
In the august three-towered town,
That wears thy glory for a crown.

Mild and benignant as thy blessing,
The air was balm, cool and caressing;
On that soft azure breath he came
Within a wheel of silver flame,
And passed in roseate mists apart
To hide in my unworthy heart.

On thy birthday, O Mother and Maid,
The Dove of my dreams made me afraid,
In thy high city of pale gold,
Steep-spired, majestical and old,
In thy serene, most plaintive town
That wears thy lilies for a crown.

WILFRED ROWLAND CHILDE.

Guilty Love

How much is love worth?
  Is it worth peace?
Is it worth quietness,
  And heart's ease?
How much is love worth?
  Not all of these.

Some day I'll find love
  That does not demand
Peace and quietness
  From my hand.
I shall search still for it
  Over the land.

I shall not purchase
  Your love. I
Shall seek much farther
  Before I buy.
It's pretty to look at,
  But it's much too high.

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.

Sea Gulls in Flight

Had Greece a glory to compare with this
Light dip of wings against an autumn sky?
What templed curve on the Acropolis
Gleamed in the morning sun more silvery
Than these bright burnished breasts? Freer of flight
What Hermes went in bronze? What marble wing
Lifted more gracefully? And from his height
What passionate god held earth so small a thing?
There was full grandeur in Olympian Zeus;
Color and grace sang in Tanagran clay;
Warm Aphrodite, lovely, voluptuous,
Breathed in the marble . . . Ares flamed his way.
But where were glories to compare with these
Immortal birds above immortal seas?

MARGERY ATWOOD TODAHL.

October

O gypsy king, what though your reign be brief?
O young and laughing god, whose wistful eyes
Reflect the ardent azure of the skies,
Whose voice is eloquent of hidden grief,
The sapphire sparkles in your mountain lakes,
The ruby and the topaz in your trees,
Like fairy gems they cluster 'round your knees—
How beautiful the earth your beauty makes!
What though above your twilight-song you hear
The north wind's silver bugles? Do not heed
Their keen, insistent prophecy, but lead
The brave death-pageant of the dying year . . .
On far-flung hills there gleams your gallant fire,
O flaming spirit of our heart's desire!

CATHERINE PARMENTER.

Company Coming

I opened the door and a broom fell in.
This started me into softest humming.
There were many folk of immediate kin
But somehow I knew just who was coming.

I wonder if I shall know long before
That death is coming to visit me
If the cock crows in the kitchen door
That he is bringing company.

RAYMOND KRESENSKY.

Caution

If the moon should give you a coin,
Shiny and cold to touch,
Don't spend it on rainbows and stars,
Don't spend it on dreams and such.

But put it aside for a night
When the clouds are dark and black,
Then take out your shiny coin
And buy the moonbeams back.

NORMAN JOHNSON.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

The Neighborhood Season Starts

WELL—repertory up-to-date has started once more in the fashionable region of Grand Street. Ever since The Dybbuk brought forth last year the best powers of the Neighborhood Playhouse and made that little institution a centre of wonder and discussion among New York's theatre-goers, the illusion has been dispelled that all successful drama must be produced above Thirty-ninth Street and somewhere south of Sixty-fifth. Of course, many devoted pilgrims had discovered the modest glories of Grand Street long before The Dybbuk—but that is another story. For the moment, we are interested in the definite attempt of this theatre to produce a permanent playing company, to present an alternation of new plays with revivals and lyric dramas, and to capture the nucleus, at least, of a permanent audience for this varied form of entertainment. The attempt is a valiant one. Will it succeed?

There are many elements to be taken into account. The idea itself is plausible, but it obviously needs for its successful realization, first, the right plays; second, intelligent and versatile actors; third, interesting production methods; fourth, expert direction; and, lastly, that amazing degree of unselfish devotion which alone can bring working harmony to a group by nature temperamental. Taking the last first, the Neighborhood group is a shining example of practical good will. The star of today's performance will decorate the chorus of tomorrow's. That point is settled beyond doubt. Among directors, Miss Agnes Morgan ranks highly, and the Neighborhood has shown every disposition to summon outside assistance when the type of play demands it—The Dybbuk being a case in point.

Unusual stage settings and production methods have also been conspicuous features of past Neighborhood seasons. The stage designs of Mrs. Aline Bernstein, one of the permanent executive staff members of the theatre, have attracted international attention, and can be compared only with those of Norman Geddes, Robert Edmond Jones, and other masters of the art. This leaves only the players themselves and the plays—which leads us to the first production of the present season, a translation of Alfred Savoir's "satirical fable," The Lion Tamer, recently produced in Paris with the effervescent Spinelly in the leading rôle.

My impressions of the play have not changed since seeing the original French production. At that time, I remember being quite delighted with the swift satire of the first act and dismally disappointed by the commonplace bedroom farce material of the second—a disappointment which the resumption of satire in the third act could not dispel. The main idea—apart from the second act digression—is an amusing conflict between the eternal idealist, to whom the means employed finally become far less important than the attainment of a desired end, and the practical energetic man of action who accepts things such as they are and adapts his life from moment to moment. The last of the Lonsdales having spent his life in fomenting revolutions which failed to come off, is now following a circus in the hope of seeing the lion tamer eaten by his lions—this end epitomizing for him the just revolt of the brutally oppressed. Finding the lions as unwilling to revolt as oppressed humans, he tries to accomplish the same object through encompassing the infidelity of the lion tamer's wife. The second act is taken up with this trite situation.

Apparently some managements entertain the theory that cleverness covers a multiplicity of bad taste, and a corollary that what is cheap in the cups of a commercial manager becomes nectar in the goblets of the art theatre. The theory is as false as its corollary is tainted with subtle egotism. The notion that the king can do no wrong is outmoded, to say the least. The Savoir play has its moments of delightful and promising satire in the first and third acts; but without an amputation of the second act, the play as a whole has no possible justification. In so far as choice of plays is important in the program of a repertory theatre, the Neighborhood has gotten off to a discouraging start.

On the side of acting, there is some cause for further disappointment. Ian Maclaren, as Lord Lonsdale, is at his best—a mature and expert rendition of a satiric type. Dorothy Sands, as the lion tamer's wife, is obviously miscast as to general type, but manages by sheer intelligence and versatility to give a satisfactory performance. Marc Loebell shows an improved range in a difficult part, but, in company with Otto Hulicius as the lion tamer, bears heavily the mark of the amateur. Albert Carroll confirms the suspicion that in "straight parts" he is as uninteresting and ineffective as he is provocative and skilful in character rôles and parts demanding stylized acting. Briefly, The Lion Tamer is the nadir of The Dybbuk.

The Shelf

FRANCES STARR has selected as the vehicle for her return to New York an incredibly stupid play by Dorrance Davis, in which one Stella Amaranth goes to many lengths of fibbing and intrigue to prove that as a mistress of feminine charms she is not yet on the shelf. To detail the crude progress of the plot—enough of it, if rightly used, for three or four plays—would serve no useful purpose. Someone, possibly the author, possibly the producer, has tried to bolster up the scaffolding by a few daring remarks which, happily, fall upon ears already deafened by boredom.

Of the acting of Miss Starr herself, it seems rather cruel to form any present estimate based on the load she tries to carry. She makes many attempts at comedy in the style of Laura Hope Crews—and falls considerably short of that comedienne's superb facility. She does not accomplish what many fine artists have done in poor plays—make at least one part stand out with reality and distinction. The Shelf is appropriately named. Few plays more obviously belong there.

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes

THIS is a literal transplanting to the stage of Anita Loos's book of the same name—which means that it is not a play at all, but simply a series of incidents strung together with the object of displaying to advantage that champion gold-digger of all time, Lorelei Lee. Its implications remain, as in the book, something for the worldly wise to look wise about. It is by no means as innocent as most of its lines.

For June Walker it offers a chance to display a versatile talent. As Lorelei—the name, you may remember, "of a famous woman who sat on a rock in Germany"—Miss Walker

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transforms her voice, gesture, walk, and facial expression until not a trace remains of the strangely poignant girl in Processional or the visionary waif in The Glass Slipper. As a stunt, it is highly successful. As a milestone in the progress of a little actress with elements of greatness, it is placed, so to speak, on a time-wasting detour. Nor does she quite succeed in re-creating the naïve quality of Miss Loos's murderess.

Treat 'Em Rough

"I HATE safe men!" Miss Genevieve Tobin is made to coo at a certain crisis in Treat 'Em Rough, the new Hatton offering at the Klaw Theatre. And she doesn't mean safe-blowers either. Perhaps the authors of Lombardi Limited made up their minds while at Hollywood, that audiences share pretty Nora O'Hare's preference for dark and dangerous ones. In any case, they have followed current fashion in going to the seamy side of city life for their new arrangement of lingerie and the cave-man. The play has many ingredients obviously injected to make it a popular success. Time is the present, place New York. There are the droll interracial contacts for which Abie and his Irish Rose have set the fashion. There is a slip of a girl, a policeman and a parish priest, all three guaranteed genuine Irish. But all these bids for box-office receipts fail to reconcile us to a bully whose "business" is the training of half-clad girls for entertainment purposes, and whose amusements oscillate between letting them make facile love to him when his temper is good, or slapping and punching them when it is bad.

The business passes in an apartment over the cabaret of Tomasso Salvatore, known locally as "the judge" for his skill in settling neighborhood clashes out of court, but whose enterprise is really run by an adopted son, Tony Barudi. Tony is the sort of city-block champion that the sporting public sees in preliminary bouts. On the authority of Father Flynn, who visits the establishment on his way to sick-calls, his cabaret is a pretty good one as such things go. A police sergeant brings a motherless girl to it in search of a job. The Irish priest leaves her there when the alternative dangers of employment in a china store and a private family have been feelingly portrayed. The orphan lifts her crapy skirts and kicks her black legs with the best of them. Among Tony's bevy of bruised beauty her arrival injects the discord we should expect. But though she catches their point of view ("A bruise you remember is better than a kiss you forget" is one of the wise-cracks) she catches nothing worse. Irish fearlessness, Irish resource and, most especially, the paralyzing effect of a gurgling little laugh that erudite critics profess to be able to score on three notes, save her when Tony is tucking up his shirt-cuffs for action. The play ends in marriage and reformation.

It gives little opportunity except for some of the broadest character acting. As the sulky young slave-driver, Allan Dinehart protrudes his jaw and bulges his eyes convincingly. But the measure of our dislike was already full when we realized his functions. Miss Genevieve Tobin is colleenish after a formula that does not seem to have greatly altered since the days of Little Old New York. William Ricciardi as a tempestuous amateur of goldfish and love-birds gave racial gusto full vent. It is fair to add that there is nothing very objectionable in the way Treat 'Em Rough is put upon the stage. It is its implications that are at fault. These register so low a mark in behavioristic standards that they earn it its place with the "unpleasant" plays of the season.

H. L. S.

BOOKS

Her Son's Wife, by Dorothy Canfield. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.00.

The Time of Man, by Elizabeth Madox Roberts. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

WHATEVER of the condemnatory may hover in the commonly made statement that novel-writing is becoming more and more exclusively a feminine occupation, will find little to nurture it in these two novels. Each is about a woman, and by a woman; and each is, beyond question, remarkable.

It is not likely, of course, than even an implacably virile critic would have had Miss Canfield in mind in formulating his exceptions to the feminization of fiction. Her past achievement, though essentially unmasculine, is sturdy enough in bulk, competent enough in intelligence and adventurous enough in outlook, to appease the most squirearchical exactions. But it is perfectly fair, upon the appearance of a new novel of Miss Canfield's, to remind the squirearchy afresh that she is a woman, and that the strictures against her sex's literary habits, how just soever, are not quite just enough to be allowed as absolute.

Not that Miss Canfield is perfect, either as an artist, or as a moralist. But she does belong in that superior class of craftsmen whose very deficiencies are worthy of serious attention. Her Son's Wife displays the combination of traits to which The Bent Twig, and The Brimming Cup have already accustomed us; there is the unaffectedly warm and generous humanity, the preoccupation with the social and practical side of morals, the ardent honesty, worthy of the very greatest respect, which prompts her, in addressing her problems, to try to disencumber her mind of all convention; and there is also—what is frequently the concomitant of these valuable and enterprising qualities—a certain failure to perceive the full dimensions of any ethical canon, a certain opportunism of conclusion, a lack of the profoundest sense of the consonance between virtue and the human soul.

In other words, though Miss Canfield is deeply moral, she is not religious. Her conclusion in The Brimming Cup was orthodox, whereas her conclusion in Her Son's Wife is that the end may sometimes justify the means; but in their animating philosophy, the two conclusions are exactly alike. In the earlier book, the wife refused to leave her husband for her lover because she realized the superior selflessness of the former's love; in Her Son's Wife, Mary Bascomb virtually hypnotizes her daughter-in-law into a state of chronic invalidism in order that the latter's child, freed from her dominion, may have a chance of normal development. Both decisions are pragmatic—that is, conditioned upon the specific circumstances alone; and both are, of course, even in their own terms, faulty and incomplete. It does not take very long to demonstrate that the chief practical flaw in the principle of choosing to do what will work out best, is that, presently, nothing will work out at all; that, if the permanance of marriage can be made to depend upon a wife's luck in being unselfishly loved, there is really nothing much to be said in favor of marriage itself; that, if the human rights of a child can be vindicated by destroying the human rights of its parent, it will not be long before all rights whatsoever are treated as non-existent.

It is worth noting, too, that it is almost impossible to convey an invented morality in terms of a really satisfactory art.

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The chief technical deficiency of Her Son's Wife, considered as a realistic recital, derives from this. In Miss Canfield's plan, Mary Bascomb's decision to get Lottie "flat on her back in bed" and out of the way, is a part of her larger decision to serve Lottie's child. But this strikes upon the imagination with a terrific effect of disproportion. We cannot take so casually, all in our stride, as it were, the notion that one human being blandly "suggests" spinal trouble to another. An idea so strange in its nature and so sinister in its connotations can hardly be made to seem a mere annex to other ideas more familiar. Not only as a moral problem, but as a psychological possibility, it looms up, challenging and unique; and its hasty incidental treatment here seriously impairs one's sense of the reliability of the whole last half of the novel.

Nevertheless, the merits of Her Son's Wife are great. The picture of Mary Bascomb at the beginning—the domineering, fastidious, successful school-teacher, who has reared a son on her earnings, knows her job, and is fiercely proud of her place and her achievements—is admirable. The study of her reaction when, in the middle of his senior year, Ralph brings home as his bride a common, cheaply pretty, almost illiterate girl, is admirable. And the depiction of the situation which develops when little Dids is born, and Mary Bascomb must stand by and see her victimized by her father's indolence and her mother's ignorance, is something more. I cannot recall any book worthy to set beside this one in the realization of what the love for a helpless child can be, and what the misery of its frustration.

If The Time of Man, by Elizabeth Madox Roberts, a newcomer among novelists, receives less space here, it is not because it is less good. As a matter of fact, though this is very definite praise indeed, it is much better—and not only much better than Miss Canfield's, but also much better than any other current novel that comes to mind. It can be dealt with briefly because it has a smooth, flawless simplicity of conception and execution which centers the attention instead of dispersing it.

It is the sort of book that those who care much for our national letters have been praying for—a piece of unqualified realism which is also a poem. Its matter is the life of Ellen Chesser, a daughter of the vagabond farmers who drifted through Kentucky and Tennessee about twenty-five years ago —her childhood, womanhood, marriage, motherhood. Its method is the subjective one of Dorothy Richardson and James Joyce, but here redeemed from freakishness and tiring excess into a sane relation with the objective. It is a method which wholly justifies itself. The flux of experience comes through it with complete authority, unfinished, uninterrupted, yet significant, imperious, intense; full of irrelevant yet meaningful figures, full of the sharp fragments of events and stories, things with no beginning and no end, yet fused into the unity of Ellen's glowing consciousness.

The distinction of the author's mind, the intensity of the feeling she displays, the tranquillity of its control, the overwhelming simplicity of its expression—for there is no sign here of the throbbing style, no rhetoric, no departure in manner from the severe realities of the matter—are extraordinary. The Ellen through whose eyes she looks is a poet, blessed beyond most of her kind in that she lives her poetry. Life, life harsh and homely as she has always known it—the planting of gardens, the long toil in tobacco fields, the herding of cows and turkeys, the glimpses of new country as she and her gypsy companions come up over the crest of a hill—comes to her with the sharp impact of ecstasy:

"In her mind, the house touched something she almost knew. The tree-tops above the roof, the mist in the trees, the points of the roof, dull color, all belonging to the farmer, the yellow wall, the distance lying off across a rolling cornfield that was mottled with the wet and traced with lines of low corn—all these touched something settled and comforting in her mind, something like a drink of water after an hour of thirst, like a little bridge over a stream that ran out of a thicket, like cool steps going up into a shaded doorway."

Later, when she emerges from her wild, solitary childhood, and the companionship of her fellow-workers on this or that farm is added, the joy is almost unbearable. It is unbearable, and so, too, is the pain, when, at her parting with Jonas Prather:

"They stood together weeping, she with tears and he with wrenching sobs. 'I'd as soon give up life itself as you, Elleen,' he said. His words mingled with their weeping, falling between their cries and their caresses. 'God-almighty blast me to perdition if ever I forget you, Elleen. When I come back, we'll get married.' "

But Jonas marries Sallie Lou, and though at first Ellen's heart seems dead, life is too strong in her to be defeated. She loves again, and marries Jasper Kent. She bears many children. She and Jasper have a little prosperity, but much more trouble. He is faithless. Her best-loved child dies. And still, at the end, when her children are almost grown, Luke, the orchard man, can say to her:

" 'You're worth all the balance put alongside together.' . . . He pressed the soil firmly down and laid the sods in place, pressing them carefully. 'You're worth all the balance and to spare. You got the very honey of life in your heart. Today I says to myself while I dug the holes for the Sharons and the Elbertas in Arland Booker's orchard, I says, she's got the honey of life in her heart.' "

MARY KOLARS.

The Truth About Mormonism, by James H. Snowden. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.50.

MORMONISM'S secret is simple, but the majority of the writers who have essayed its exposition have missed it. Among the vast crowd of Mormonism's critics, from E. D. Howe to Dr. Snowden, only one man seems to have fully grasped this secret. This man is Josiah F. Gibbs, who, in 1909, published from the press of the Salt Lake Tribune his book, Lights and Shadows of Mormonism.

Protestantism cannot disown Mormonism, for Mormonism is the only fully consistent Protestantism. Even the Baptist antiquarians attempt to prove an attenuated tactual succession, starting from the days of Pope Cornelius as a point of contact. Before the Novatian schism, they say, Catholics and Baptists were members of one body. And the other important denominations, according as they may approach for their norm the Anglican High-Church ritualism, fix the points of their departures from the parent stem at earlier or later dates. Thus, the Methodist antiquarians, while contending for a providential initiation of the Wesleyan system, are not unmindful of the importance of a certain quasi-historical authority by succession and have persuaded themselves that John Wesley, an ordained priest of the Established English Church, became a bishop by the default of the Anglican bishops to whom he appealed in vain to consecrate bishops for his missions.

But the fundamental assumption of Mormonism is that the Catholic Church, at an early date, departed from the Christian

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faith and thus plunged the whole of Christendom into a night of apostasy that was without a single star, until an angel, on the hill "Cumorah," in May, 1826, restored to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery "the priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering angels," and promised that the divine pabulum should "never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness." Various zealots, appearing about the same time in New York, Pennsylvania and what is now West Virginia, undertook the "restoration" of the primitive Church.

Thus Mormonism shares with several other movements which were then initiated, the idea of an altogether new commencement of the Christian Church and, in part, belongs to that genus of denominations which includes the Disciples ("Campbellites") "Christian Church" ("New Lights") and a little later on the Holiness "Church of God," etc. All these are "restorers," but the latter are deficient in that they are anachronisms, merely imitating without any attempt to find tactual connection with what they consider to have been the system of the primitive Church. Even these imitations fall short, by their own acknowledgments, of the primitive pattern (they do not have apostles and prophets); whereas Mormonism, consistent with its "restoration" premises, offers to mankind the plenary authority and thaumaturgy of the original Twelve. And certainly, if the Church were restored, in 1826 or any other year, who can deny that miraculous manifestations, as in the beginning, would be quite necessary to prove its divine mission? Such, then, is the theory and strongest appeal of Mormonism.

Is it surprising, therefore, that Mormonism should be an almost 100 percent "Nordic" product? The Smiths came from Vermont and were steeped in the eschatology of New England fundamentalism. Brigham Young was a typical Yankee, shrewd, practical, and calculating. The Mormon missionaries won their converts in England, Scandinavia, North Germany, and Holland. Dr. Snowden mentions this fact but does not seem to realize its significance.

First of all, the Mormons offered to a people steeped in prejudice against Catholicism, an opportunity to rid themselves of every remaining vestige of Romanism in the Reformed churches. Even after the dénouement of 1852, when the "revelation" on "celestial marriage" was published, Mormonism was not wholly unattractive; for, had not several of the leading Reformers condoned bigamy, if not polygamy? The Anabaptist John of Leyden had practised polygamy at Muenster under his "theocracy"; Luther had winked at it; and even Burnet, who wrote what once passed for history to justify the revolution in England, was not averse to entertaining the suggestion.

We are indebted to Dr. Snowden for some information about the "Prophet" Joseph that is not supplied in the average book on Mormonism. Joseph is a problem for the psychologist even today. He played fast and loose both with the members of his family and the "witnesses" who "saw" the plates of his "Golden Bible." Here, it may be, the higher criticism of Mormonism, which, of late, has been developed in the very bosom of the Church, comes to our assistance.

Joseph began as a water-witch, a seeker for lost mines, a "peep-stone" virtuoso. But, when latterly his fortune was made and he was surrounded by a numerous following, he was enabled to attain a certain degree of religious "sincerity" as the profane world understands the word. His impostures then took on the form of external dramatizations of certain interior experiences. He was an epileptic. In his mind the two domains may finally have merged. The whole story was an allegory. The "plates" were symbolical embellishments.

The Spaulding manuscript origin theory still stands. It alone accounts for the actual literary genesis of the Book of Mormon. Elder Sidney Rigdon was the intermediary. But what a grim joke the Reverend Spaulding, who knew a little Greek, played on the Mormons, with his "manuscript found in the wilds of Mormon"! Unintentionally, of course, and never anticipating that it would ever turn up as a new "Bible," he slipped in his little hoax. The Mormons, altogether ignorant of Greek, swallowed it. For "Mormon," in Greek, means "bug-bear"!

ROBERT R. HULL.

Saint Catherine of Siena: As Seen in Her Letters, translated and edited by Vida D. Scudder. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.00.

SAINTS are marvelous things. A French farmer's daughter, young and profoundly ignorant, leads an army to victory, and places a king upon his throne. An Italian dyer's daughter, untaught save by the experiences of life, becomes a controlling factor in Church and state, and brings a Sovereign Pontiff back to his see in Rome. Joan is said to have shown military skill, Catherine to have demonstrated her powers of statesmanship; but neither of these women accomplished her purpose by force of ability, but by force of inspiration. It was the saint, not the woman, who did the work at hand.

Miss Scudder has given to English readers a sympathetic study of Saint Catherine, and a beautifully worded translation of her letters. Each letter is prefaced by the precise information which the reader requires for understanding; and the whole volume is thus brought clearly within the range of his vision. The editor's bold assertion: "Goodness, despite a curious prejudice to the contrary, admits of more variety in type than wickedness, and produces more interesting characters," will be denied by the careless many, and admitted by the thoughtful few. Plutarch, indeed, gave his vote—which counts for a great deal—to the wicked. They are, he said, the people whom the world wants to hear about. But the spiritual life has spread broad and shining wings since Plutarch's day; and Santayana strikes a modern note when he says suavely: "It is the charm and safety of virtue that it is more natural than vice, though many moralists do their best to deprive it of this advantage."

Certainly, the beauty and joy which are attributes of saintship radiated visibly from Catherine. She combined, like Saint Teresa, the raptures of the mystic with a talent for practical detail; and, if she had none of Teresa's heaven-sent humor, she shared her insight into men's hearts, and her confidence in their redeeming qualities. She was as plain-spoken as was the Spanish nun, and her words penetrated to the secret core of human pride and weakness. Her letters, whether written to the great ones of the earth (she had two Popes, a French king, and a dissolute queen of Naples among her correspondents) or to plain people of her own class, reveal the same unflattering candor, the same sanguine spirit, the same stern and urgent appeal. She writes to a Florentine lawyer, *Messer Ristoro Canigiani*, as a wise friend might write to a Philadelphia lawyer today; pointing out the undesirability of holding public office ("It ought to weary you even to hear it mentioned") the wisdom of avoiding public banquets, and the claims of poor clients upon his consideration. She writes

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to that unscrupulous soldier of fortune, Sir John Hawkwood, entreating him as he "takes such pleasure in war and fighting," to join the promised crusade, and turn his arms against the infidels, "who possess our Holy Place, where rested the sweet Primal Truth that bore death and pains for us."

A gap of nearly six hundred years separates Saint Catherine's world from ours. To bridge this chasm, we must have some knowledge and a great deal of imagination. Miss Scudder tells us that the society of the fourteenth century is mirrored in the Saint's pages. This is true; but we cannot easily glimpse it. The letters must be read patiently, for they are long, verbose, and sometimes confused, as dictated letters are apt to be. Catherine could not write until a few years before her death. They must be read intelligently, for they are born of their day, a day when passionate holiness balanced passionate depravity, and when saint and sinner looked into each other's souls, and understood. They must be read sympathetically, for they are, above and beyond all else, a human document, affording in their vivid self-analysis a key to the mysticism which is the supreme attribute of saintship, and which we are beginning to dimly apprehend. "The mystical," says Mr. Henry Dwight Sedgwick, "rests upon the deepest mystery, the fact of consciousness." Saint Catherine's conscious absorption in divine truth, her conscious correspondence with the divine will, left her free to suffer, but incapable of the dull misunderstanding which can make suffering unbearable.

Miss Scudder's volume is a triumph of book-making. It opens with ease, and it stays open. The paper and print are excellent. It is a dignified presentation of a dignified subject. Happy is the author whose publishers aid and abet her efforts to make her work acceptable to her readers.

AGNES REPPLIER.

Franz Liszt: L'Homme d'Amour, by Guy de Pourtalès; translated from the French by Eleanor Stimson Brooks. New York. Henry Holt and Company. $2.50.

IT is now fifteen years since Huneker's biography of Liszt made its appearance. It had long been touted, and was finally published during the auspicious year of the artist's centenary, 1911. Having collected Lisztiana for more than a quarter-century, haunting his pupils and gossiping with his friends, the Steeplejack's work was to be the definitive life. But the goods were derailed en route, and Huneker lived to tell the tale—the tale of an idol whose lustre faded with intimacy.

If Huneker apparently became half-hearted in his biography of Liszt, M. de Pourtalès seems but a little less so. It is clear that the French biographer has a part-time hero in his subject: during the grand noon of his amours and his musical activities. The period from Liszt's birth to his adolescence is one with which our author is not instinctively en rapport: thus the opening chapters of the book savor of having been written down to the reader, whose capacity for sentimentality is overestimated; while, as regards the closing decade of the Abbé's life, the tale occasionally lapses into East Lynne bathos.

And so we remain without a biography of Liszt attaching itself to the classic line, and more and more the fault seems Liszt's and not his biographers'—who have been many indeed. The temptation to write the great biography of Liszt seems perennial; but Liszt inevitably fails each seeker in turn. He was a man of unrealized potentialities: full of inspiration but just as full of noise. In all of his diversified pursuits he attained a speedy distinction; in none was he preëminent—save (and this was his Nessus-shirt) in his amours. If, in his youth, he saw France and Austria at his feet for his sheer pianism (abetted by his position as the world's most adorable lover) he could yet meet with lukewarm shoulders in Germany, Italy, and England. He never obtained in his composition a complete expression of the greatest that was in him. It took his kinsprit, Richard Wagner, to do this. He was, as Nietzsche aphorized him, "the conglomerate of a hundred musicians' souls, but not enough of a personality to cast his own shadow upon them." In most of his piano works there is a peculiar quality of vapidity, usually on the grand scale of an elephantine digitary interest. Unwittingly, M. de Pourtalès sums up—very incisively—his gamut as composer when he observes: "This Parisian from Italy had discovered how to glorify Gypsy music."

But—"He always played from memory. He was the first artist who had dared to do so. He invented the recital, that is, the concert with the piano alone. He even took one more step along the road to unity by dedicating certain evenings to a single composer, Beethoven, Berlioz, or even Liszt, which seemed as daring as it was impertinent." And he was the most zealous as well as the most qualified apostle of the new music of his day—Wagner and Schumann, Berlioz and Rossini.

In the form employed, M. de Pourtalès subscribes to the Strachey-Maurois school of biographical fiction—and he does so very successfully. Pourtalès knows his Liszt—well enough to represent Berlioz in a series of unkindly asides. As it is probable that many readers of this book will receive no other evaluation of these two composers than the aforementioned, it seems advisable to call attention to the poetic reason for this subtle sacrifice of Berlioz at Liszt's feet. At the present moment in the evolution of music, Liszt's influence is enormous—so solid is the reaction against stuffed and trussed romanticism. Berlioz, on the other hand, reëngages our attention and deepens our admiration, by virtue of his technical genius for the orchestra and the clear discharge of his generous inspiration. It is rather a pity that a wider reading public cannot be assured this book. It should satisfy the current appetite for feverish literature, and easily become a best seller. But the public always shys at "music in a book." The translation by Eleanor Stimson Brooks is very readable.

WALTER V. ANDERSON.

Personality and Reality: A Proof of the Real Existence of a Supreme Self, by J. E. Turner. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

ACTING under the inspiration of Darwin, the fiat went forth that the argument from design might be wiped off the board though, as a matter of fact, the abandonment of that argument is urged by Darwin in one of the most unphilosophical of his many unphilosophical statements. Even if natural selection were proved truth, the argument in question would merely require restatement—and restated it has been time and again.

In this interesting book, Dr. Turner sets himself to the task, not merely of restating it, but of raising it to a higher index. This is attempted by turning more to the dynamic and less to the static aspect, as Paley did in his famous example of the watch found on the heath. Special consideration should be directed to the excessively complicated and apparently automatic and autonomous machinery which the ingenuity of inventors has given to the public, particularly in the past few decades. To the savage or the uninstructed rustic, such pieces of machinery must seem really automatic, and even self-explana-

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tory; though they should not to anyone who gives them a moment's reflection.

"Between the highly developed consciousness of the inventor and controller of such mechanisms, and the simple consciousness of such an observer, there has gradually arisen an almost absolute chasm, comparable only to the contrast between a child and a Newton; the purposes and methods of the one have become utterly incomprehensible to the other; and yet the first has continuously evolved from the second, so that in their nature they remain essentially akin."

Turning to the apparent automatism of nature as seen, for example, in the intra-atomic movements, "matter manifests itself always under the form of extremely complex autonomous mechanism"; to such an extent that to the naturalist and the materialist, "the only logical implication of the perfect mechanism of the natural world is the total absence of any directive mind." They are precisely in the position of the savage when confronted with a gramophone. He cannot imagine that the thing is not alive and self-explanatory; they cannot understand that nature is not self-explanatory, dead or alive. The fact is, that the greater the complexity of the mechanism, the greater the simulation of automatism and the greater the mind of the inventor.

The rest of the argument must be quite obvious, and its further working out should be studied in the setting of the book itself. The author alludes to the fact that many believe that the existence of a God is insusceptible of proof. "No arguments," wrote Westcott, "can establish the existence of an infinite personal God. It is a primary intuition, and not a deduction. No reasoning can establish its truth." Dr. Turner continues by stating that this "attitude, I believe, is contrary to that of Roman Catholicism, resting as this does in part, at least, on the deductions of scholasticism." If the writer will look into the teachings of that scholasticism, he will find that Saint Thomas's great argument from motion to a prime Mover is really just the thing he is seeking.

BERTRAM C. A. WINDLE.

Modern French Poetry, compiled and translated by Joseph T. Shipley. New York: Greenberg, Publisher. $3.00.

Casements: Fifty Poems by Fifty French Poets, selected and translated by Richard Cloudesley Savage. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.00.

THE amount of modern French poetry translated into English will be found by any earnest seeker to be remarkably small in comparison to the poetry translated from the German, Italian and Spanish, or even from the Russian. The result, perhaps, may be the reflection of credit on our English and American knowledge of the French language; nevertheless, considering the excellence of Gallic poetry, its inspiration, advancement and originality, the general paucity of French translations is a surprising discovery.

The name of Joseph T. Shipley has long been associated with French translations in the pages of Poet Lore, and his introduction to his present collection has the flavor of serious study and a profound understanding: his selections also are made with a truly catholic expanse of culture and, while the general effect of his work is excellent, we can only regret what seems to be a defective rhythmical sense in his versions. His conscientiousness to convey the sense of his originals rather overcomes the musical result of them, so throughout the book we find things that are exquisite in the original spirit reduced rather overmuch to prose standards.

In Casements, by Richard Cloudesley Savage, there are somewhat finer results, and a rather higher standard of translation. Mr. Savage's fifty poets are not chosen quite as wisely or with the generous breadth of appreciation shown by Mr. Shipley, but a more delicate touch, a higher quality of translucency shines in general through his versions. Little Gregory, from Theodore Botrel is well translated, but lacks the tender turns of the original; Mr. Savage recovers himself artistically with the fine translation of My Heaven, from Sully Prudhomme. The translator from the French into English is as certainly born as is any original poet, and we must sigh, even while thanking Mr. Shipley and Mr. Savage, for the pen of a vanished Father Prout and Denis Florence McCarthy.

THOMAS WALSH.

The Green Lacquer Pavilion, by Helen Beauclerk. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.50.

TO Taveridge Hall, in the year of Our Lord 1710, come a small yet representative group of ladies and gentlemen from the Court of St. James; and this delightful fantasy chronicles the adventures which befall them and their hosts from the time they step through the portals of the green lacquer pavilion—which had been, but a moment before its sudden enlargment, only part of the embroidery on a Chinese screen—until they return, a much sobered group, to their tea in the drawing-room of Taveridge Hall.

The situations are carefully chosen to bring into relief the foibles of these proper Georgians who sail with pirates, exercise their courtesy on cannibals, discover in the treachery of the Bouradjirs the fallacies of Whig politics. Occasionally a sally fails; there are times when the insipid face of triteness shows through the make-up of cleverness; but such shortcomings are, fortunately, in an umbrageous minority.

Truth is scattered here, the truth found in dreams, unreal yet more real than life. And when a soul is given to these animated puppets, the writing freshens into poetry, humor and satire become pathos and irony. In this respect the story reaches its apogee in disclosing the adventures of Lady Taveridge. This middle-aged and respectable gentlewoman finds again the love of her youth: "She was returned to the unthinking, radiant place that men have likened to a garden."

But one cannot dwell forever on the enchanted side of a green lacquer screen, and on the prosaic side Lady Taveridge is the dutiful—but unloving and unloved—wife of a country squire. Realization comes: love is frustrated: and "it seemed that she had passed beyond fear into the empty spaces where

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resignation dwells, and even her passion for Safir was become a dull craving, such as a woman feels for those whom time and distance have taken from her."

LURTON BLASSINGAME.

I Mistici, by Arrigo Levasti. Florence, Italy: Bemporad and Son. Two volumes, lire 16.

AMONG the collection of I Libri Necessari issued under the direction of the Italian author Giovanni Papini, there is the highly satisfactory biographical and bibliographical dictionary of I Mistici of the mystics of Greece, the Latin world, and the Italian, German, Spanish, French, English, and Polish.

Signor Arrigo Levasti has compiled dates and critical notices of each of the Christian mystics, quoting liberal extracts from their literary works. He ranges from Saint Clement of Alexandria, through Saint Ephrem the Syrian, and Saint Gregory of Nissa, and other figures of the Greek and Latin Church. He deals with Richard de Saint Victor, Albert the Great, Abelard, Saint Francis of Assisi and his followers, not overlooking Saint Angela da Foligno, Saint Catherine of Siena, and Saint Lawrence Justinian of the mediaeval period.

All the familiar names are here, from Eckhart, the German, and Tauler, Saint Thomas à Kempis, Saint Peter of Alcántara, Fray Luis de Granada, Saint Teresa of Avila, and Fray Luis de Leon. Among them he has included many of the important, if less well-known, figures of ecstatics and inspired authors.

Signor Levasti has accomplished a noble work in making this compilation from sources often difficult to follow; if our Catholic scholarship may hope to recall the world to a realization of what is Christian mysticism, properly so called, from the nebulous theories of modern authors regarding the subject, so that we may distinguish between the imperfect schools of Hindu theosophists and Rabbinical systems, it will only be accomplished by a proper use of the sources of information which Signor Levasti and the distinguished editors of this Italian collection present to us in such excellent volumes as I Mistici.

RODERICK GILL.

Twenty Sonnets, by Gustav Davidson. New York: Blue Faun Publications. $2.00.

IN Twenty Sonnets, the poet Gustav Davidson develops a love theme from its April phases, through loss, to the inevitable acceptance of divine fate and the consolations of philosophy. Mr. Davidson's sonnets maintain an excellent level, show a gentle charm in many passages, and reveal a poetical personality modern in its reserves and well moderated in its transports. This sonnet marks the climax in his theme:

"Now, in a moment, all that we have been
  One to another in a timeless hour
  Dies in us suddenly, as any flower
That spends too richly and with too serene
An air of giving, its inaugural green;
  Leaving us poorer than ever, we and our
  Bright passion slain, our sometime pride and power
Become a ghost no longer heard or seen.
And to whatever liberal gods we pray,
  We cannot ever, once the moment goes,
  Restore the magic or renew the rose;
Nor to the skylark, winging, bid it stay.
  The sun sinks in the west, the river flows,
And a whole world will blossom and decay."

T. C.

BRIEFER MENTION

Better Writing, by Henry Seidel Canby. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $1.35.

THERE is, in some novel or other, a fatherly character who advises his son thus excellently: "Write me every week, my boy. And don't mind if you haven't anything to say." A great deal of academic training in composition surely reposes on the same principle—write whether you have anything to scribble about or not. In a way, I suppose, the principle is intrinsically sound, just as a youngster may legitimately kick a football around without ever getting into the game. Dr. Canby's point merely puts it in its right place: all rightly written expressions of thought or imaginative fancy must rest upon a substantial intellectual substructure; one cannot scribble rationally without thinking cogently; and he who would wrestle with the sins of composition must stage the battle within himself. Much of what is said in this little book ought to be of the greatest assistance to the increasing number of those who have been coaxed into literary effort without an adequate preliminary training. It will show them, if they can see, how the thing must be done if it is to be done at all. One regrets a certain tendency on the part of the author to group so many subjects under a heading that it becomes extremely difficult to envisage them properly.

The Commercial Side of Literature, by Michael Joseph and Grant Overton. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

ONE would think that the commercialism in literature might be minimized with some good results to letters and culture, but we are all aware that the reading public has increased enormously and with this increase have accumulated intricate problems for the writers and printers, publishers and distributors of books. There are certainly, as Messrs. Joseph and Overton allow, too many novels, too many unimportant autobiographies, but a special discussion as to their merits and place in the book world is certainly not untimely. The confusion of the average literary man in the presence of manuscript agencies and publishing experts warrants a further demand for this work: the proper handling of a manuscript before and after its acceptance, to save embarrassments for the author and publisher, gives a place to this volume with both these classes of bookmen, and a handy corner on the shelves of public reference libraries.

Regards sur la vie, by Édouard Trogan. Paris: Librarie Bloud and Gay. 10 francs.

IN leisurely but alert essay fashion, the veteran editor of Le Correspondant, oldest, most liberal, and probably most distinguished of the French Catholic reviews, commented upon affairs from 1919 to 1925. The present volume reprints these papers quite as they appeared, thus enabling one to go over historic ground with an expert guide. M. Trogan comments upon the Peace Treaty, the reparations, the debts, and the Locarno pacts. The American reader will be particularly interested in numerous anecdotes of rare quality and pertinence, concerning such well-known individuals as General Maitrot, Clemenceau, the Count de Chambord, and Charles Maurras. It is a pleasure, indeed, to put one's stamp of approval upon a book which illustrates so well as does Regards sur la vie, the finest principles and methods of journalism.

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THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

"Ah," said Britannicus, rubbing his hands in satisfaction over the morning paper, "America is learning. She is, after all, a great country."

"Thanks," replied Miss Brynmarian, dryly.

"And it is her English stock that has made her so," went on Britannicus decisively. "Here, in two important announcements showing sane, level-headed psychology, is apparent the influence of Anglo-Saxon tradition."

"Indeed?" queried Miss Brynmarian. "And what may these announcements be?"

"Hanover College," replied Britannicus, "which is a co-educational institution, has revived an old edict that all women students shall be confined to their various residences after six o'clock each evening, the rule, naturally, not applying to men. What could be more English than that?" demanded Britannicus.

"Nothing," admitted Miss Brynmarian, who had been looking over his shoulder at the newspaper item. "However, I am not alarmed at what might appear at first glance an overthrow of American tradition. For the rest of the statement says that a general student strike is in progress as a result of this mediaeval edict. And what could be more American than that?"

"Nothing," allowed Britannicus, in his turn. "However, I feel enough confidence in America to be reasonably sure that the college authorities will win, being on the side of common sense. For after all, logic and all experience point to the truth of the slogan, 'woman's place is in the home.' Even many women themselves—women of judgment—recognize this."

"In other words, when the fight for suffrage was on, you were in sympathy with the anti-suffragists," commented Miss Brynmarian, her tone carrying a world of sarcasm.

"Indeed, yes," replied Britannicus. "I was greatly discouraged over their defeat. They were women who steadfastly stood for the truth of that slogan."

"The answer to that," replied Miss Brynmarian, "lies in a piece of reminiscence. You probably don't remember that when the battle for the feminine vote was raging, the anti-suffragists rented a New York office in a teeming business section, and hung a large banner in the window bearing your pet motto: 'The Home Is Woman's Sphere.' The suffragists rented an office directly above that of the 'antis' and also hung a banner. It read:

'If the home is woman's sphere,
What are the 'antis' doing here?' "

"Mere cheap feminine retaliation," replied Britannicus. "But the right ideas about women—the English ideas—will, in the long run, win out in America."

"I can assure you," sniffed Miss Brynmarian, "that the long run will not be a home-run."

Britannicus ignored her as he turned a sheet of his paper.

"Here," he declared, "is another indication that the wind is blowing in the right direction. Listen to this:

" 'Bridgeton, New Jersey: Saint Paul's admonition to 'let the women keep silence in the church' was quoted today in an adverse report on the application of Mrs. Elizabeth M. Finn of Philadelphia for ordination as a Baptist minister. The advisory committee voted four to one against Mrs. Finn's ordination.' "

"Yes," said Miss Brynmarian, once more peeping over his shoulder, "but again you've missed the gist of the item. It

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goes on to say that 'the report precipitated a lively discussion during which the Reverend Robert R. Thompson expressed the belief that if Saint Paul had been a married man instead of a bachelor, he wouldn't have spoken of women as he did.' "

"The answer to that," replied Britannicus, who is a bachelor, "is that he wouldn't have dared to—unless he had married a real woman—an anti-suffragist."

"I'm afraid," said Miss Brynmarian, "that you don't belong to this age."

"I don't" admitted Britannicus. "It is a chaotic age—an age of lost values. Women intruding on our barber shops, our smoking rooms, our business conferences, even our editorial luncheons, where they distinctly hamper the flow of speech and of thought. An editorial luncheon should really be something like what the old coffee-houses in eighteenth-century England were—places of rest and entertainment where only men gathered—where the reciprocity of great masculine intellects bore fruit in masterpieces of literature, enriching the world in art and ideas."

"That reminds me," said Miss Brynmarian, "of a very intelligent letter written, strange to say, by a man, and advertising a certain brand of whole-wheat crackers, which recently came to this library."

Miss Brynmarian reached in her desk and pulled out a sheaf of papers.

"Here," she said, "is another man's ideas on the old coffee-houses:

" 'Addison, Steele, Pope—'the boys'—used to convolute best about the festive board in the coffee-house. But it is to be assumed that, after gorging themselves, the literary ideas became mere airy-litter ideas. Pope, with his twenty cups of coffee, and apoplectic Dr. Johnson, with his beefsteak pie, were stodgy, stupid, and stalled after such a stupendous stuffing stalemate. But an author, needfully watching his diet, need not 'stow' like the stoics. He can cull from the pleasures of Lucullus the biscuitory palateasement of whole-wheat crackers!' "

"Pure nonsense," muttered Britannicus. "What a pity that the coffee-house should have perished, barring as it did, its doors to women."

"That's probably why it perished," was the retort.

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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